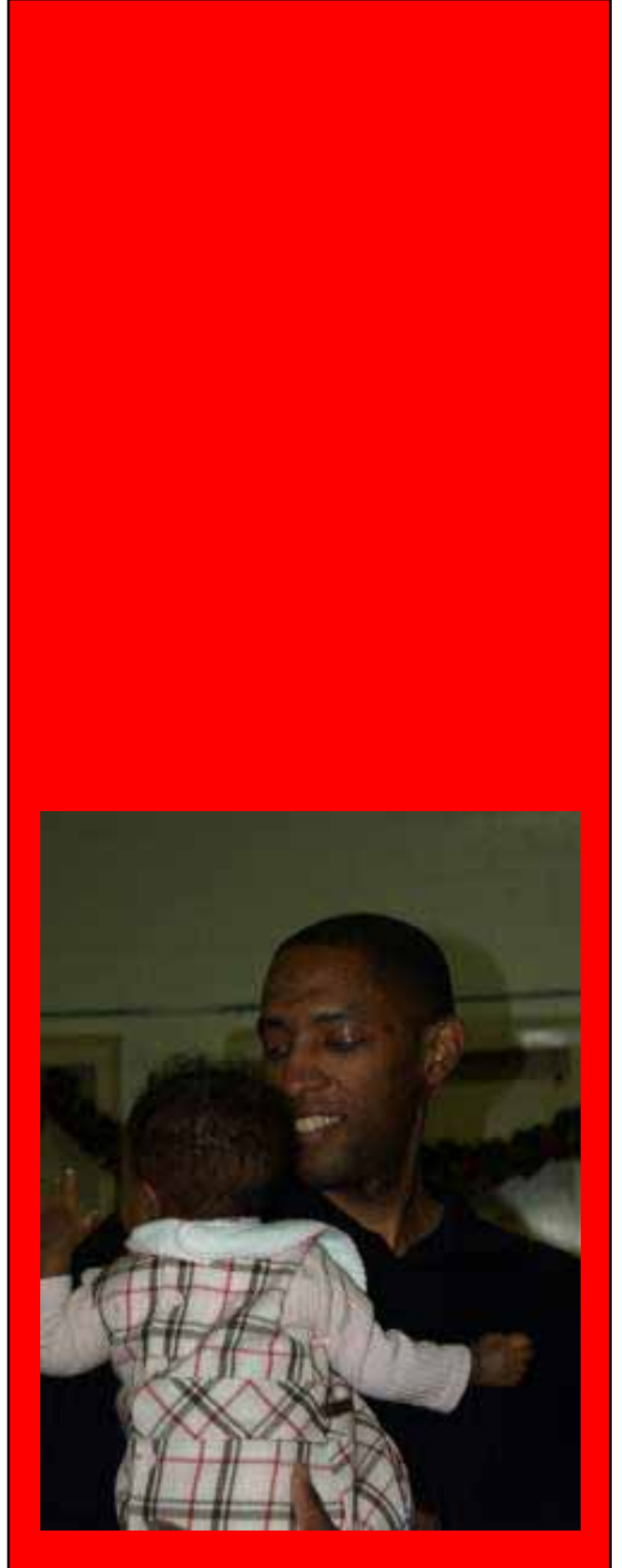




FAMILY READINESS GUIDE

A DEPLOYMENT GUIDE FOR 3D ESC SOLDIERS, CIVILIANS AND FAMILIES



**HEADQUARTERS
3^d SUSTAINMENT COMMAND
(EXPEDITIONARY)
2368 OLD IRONSIDES ROAD
FORT KNOX, KY 40121**



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 3^d SUSTAINMENT COMMAND (EXPEDITIONARY)
2368 OLD IRONSIDES ROAD
FORT KNOX, KY 40121

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

13 May 2008

A message to all Families:

Fellow Sustainers! I would like to present you with this Family Readiness Guide. This guide is designed for YOU, the Families of the 3^d ESC, to assist you during the times when your loved ones are deployed. While some of you might be new to Fort Knox and Kentucky, I assure you it is an exciting place to live. Within an hour's drive from the gates of Fort Knox are a host of historic and fun places to visit. I encourage you and your Family to take advantage of the opportunities here in the Bluegrass State.

As one of the main sources of logistical support within the US Army, we are frequently called upon to go to the field and deploy to training centers both in and outside of our Fort Knox home. These training activities are critical if we are to be prepared for our wartime mission. Long and unpredictable deployments show the challenges we face as Families in balancing our professional and personal lives. I hope that I and my staff can assist in making the quality of life during your stay here the best it can be, even during the difficult "away" periods we may endure.

I've prepared this guide for you in an effort to share information that may help you in your day-to-day activities during your spouse's absence. It is designed to be functional and easy to navigate. It contains valuable phone numbers, guides, how-to information, etc., that can help steer you in the right direction when searching for answers. Our FRG leaders recognize that living in a new community can sometimes be challenging. Therefore, we have included important information specific to getting along in our local communities and surrounding areas. If this guide does not have the answers you are looking for, help is available within our 3^d ESC Family. The FRG Advisory Council is trained and experienced to help in most situations. Feel free to contact them. Also, during times of deployments, the unit will identify a Rear Detachment Commander and First Sergeant who will make it their job to assist you as best they can.

I consider YOU, the Family member, an integral member of the 3^d ESC Team. Truly, you are the ones that get us through the most critical times. The well-being of both the Soldiers and their Families is extremely important to me. My best wishes to all of you for a successful and happy tour with 3^d ESC. I dedicate this Family Readiness Guide to all of you who *Sustain the home front*.

Best Wishes,

Michael J. Lally
Brigadier General, USA
Commanding

3^d ESC WHO WE ARE

- We provide logistics and distribution management any where, at any time, in any environment, against any adversary.
- We are dedicated to supporting its Soldiers and Families.
- We provide a single headquarters command and control for operational level sustainment and distribution management in support of Multi-national Corps-Iraq.
- We have a proud tradition.
- Our ranks are filled with highly experienced senior leaders and Soldiers.
- We are a valuable asset in the mission to return Iraq to a state of security and self sufficiency.
- We are proud members of Fort Knox and its surrounding communities.

Our Mission:

3^d Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) provides logistics and distribution management any where, at any time, in any environment, against any adversary



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3D ESC KEY CONTACT INFORMATION



Quick Reference Sheet

Frequently Called Numbers

The DSN prefix for Fort Knox is 464/536-XXXX
For Commercial Access (502) 624/626-XXXX or (502)942-XXXX
Click [HERE](#) for the DSN Global Directory

Fort Knox Operator DSN 464-1000; Commercial (502) 624-1000

Fire, MP, Ambulance: 911

Installation Operations Center (IOC) DSN 464-2707

Red Cross DSN 464-2163

IACH Hospital Emergency Room DSN 464-9000

Rear Detachment Headquarters

Room 118
Bldg 2368 Old Ironsides Ave
Fort Knox, KY 40121
502-624-8460

MAJ Moore
O: 502-624-8674
C: 502-294-6562

Rear Detachment Commander



MSG Amrhein
O: 502-624-8692



Mrs. Mary Siegel
502-624-8834
Fax: 502-624-8140

Rear Detachment
First Sergeant

Family Readiness
Support Assistant

MAILING INFORMATION

Prohibitions

Arms, including air guns; and parts of arms and munitions.

Binoculars.

Coins; banknotes; currency notes; securities payable to bearer; traveler's checks; gold, silver, platinum, manufactured or not; precious stones; jewelry; and other valuable articles.

Lighters containing butane gas.

Non-preserved meats and soft fruits.

Perishable infectious biological substances.

Perishable noninfectious biological substances.

Radioactive materials.

Tapes or cassettes.

Restrictions

For shipments containing goods valued at more than 1 Iraqi dinar, the addressee must obtain a special import license from the Ministry of Supply, Import Department, Baghdad.

Radio apparatus, and their accessories, and knives having blades over 76 millimeters (about 3 inches) in length, require permission to be obtained by the addressees from the Iraqi authorities.

Observations

Many articles are subject to an import permit/license. Therefore, senders should ascertain from the addressee before mailing whether the necessary documents are held.

Customs Forms Required

First-Class Mail International items and Priority Mail International flat-rate envelopes:

PS Form 2976 or 2976-A (see [123.61](#))

Priority Mail International parcels:

PS Form 2976-A inside 2976-E (envelope)

Unit Address

RANK NAME

HHC/3D ESC

APO AE 09391



DO NOT PUT "LSA ANACONDA" OR "IRAQ" ON THE SHIPPING ADDRESS

Weight limitation: 70 lbs

Size limitation: length + width must not exceed 108 inches

PS Form 2976-A is the form you need to fill out at the post office to mail overseas.



FRG INFORMATION



The Unit Family Readiness Group

Program Vision

A seamless force of mission-ready Soldiers and informed, self-reliant families.

Mission Statement

Provide Family Readiness Programs that promote self-reliant Soldiers and Families.

The Family Readiness Group (FRG) is your primary link to information regarding the unit and its various missions. During times of deployment, the FRG will keep you informed via newsletters, E-mail, and the Phone tree. The FRG also organizes "morale" activities for deployed Soldiers, such as Family organizational days, training, holiday and care package mailings. The FRG should function as a support system. You are invited to participate in the FRG by either attending its activities and/or volunteering for the various leadership positions.

A FAMILY READINESS GROUP IS....

- ❖ Empowers Families to be more knowledgeable and self-reliant
- ❖ Promotes more efficient use of community
- ❖ Reduces Soldier and Family member stress through resource and information sharing
- ❖ Increases the Soldier's ability to devote his/her attention to the mission by offering reassurance that the Family members have close, reliable and friendly support
- ❖ Provides a helping hand when needed
- ❖ A resource for better understanding the Military, our unit and our Soldier's mission

A FAMILY READINESS GROUP IS NOT...

- ❖ A bank resource
- ❖ A babysitting service
- ❖ A taxi / bus service
- ❖ A surrogate parent
- ❖ A gossip group
- ❖ A lending society
- ❖ All things to all people

Key Players in the Family Readiness Group:

Commander, or if the Commander is deployed, the Rear Detachment Commander (RDC), is the command's primary contact and the vital link between the FRG and the deployed unit. During deployment, the Commander or RDC is the Point of Contact (POC) for all official action.

Family Readiness Group (FRG) Leader heads the Family Readiness Group. He/she will assist the Commander with the communication link between the unit and its Family, and assists in linking Families with community resources. He/she will provide information, outreach services and emotional support to military Families before, during, and after Family separation to ease the stress associated with military life. The FRG Leader works closely with the Command, unit POCs, and FRL and organizes periodic meetings, ensures FRG volunteers receive training and recognition, oversees unit FRG activities, and represents the unit at the higher-level unit FRG or steering committee meetings.

Senior Advisor (SA) is an individual with extensive experience with the Family Readiness Program. This may be the Commander's, Command Sergeant Major's, or First Sergeant's spouse; but that is not always the case. They work with the FRG members to provide guidance and resources to the unit program. Senior Advisors also work with the higher headquarters to represent the interest of the unit Family members and the FRG.

Family Readiness Support Assistant (FRSA) works directly for the commander during peacetime and for the RDC during deployments. The FRSA's main duty is to provide the commander, the FRL, and the FRG Leader with administrative assistance in support of Family readiness programs and activities. The FRSA also works closely with the community resource agencies to provide appropriate referrals when needed.

Family Readiness Point of Contact (POC) The primary duty of a POC is to manage the information flow between the Families and the FRG Leader. This person is a Family member volunteer who maintains regular contact with the Families assigned to them and facilitates the dissemination and collection of accurate information. The POC is tasked with contacting their Family members once a month during periods of sustainment and twice a month in times of deployment.

Chaplain provides a crucial role in offering spiritual guidance, moral support, marital and Family counseling, and referrals to community resources as needed

vFRG Website

- Up and running
- An easy way to get updates
- Rear Detachment will update regularly
- Address current concerns, rumors, trends...
- Calendar
- Photos
- Newsletters From the Front

Helpful links for the Family members

- Military OneSource
- National Guard
- Army Reserve
- Go Army
- DefenseLink
- Military Homefront
- MyArmyLifeToo



How does a Family member subscribe to an FRG?

- If the Family Member has not registered for the Army FRG site already, go to www.armyfrg.org
- Click on "Find an FRG" in the left navigation bar.
- Select the CONUS or OCONUS location of the FRG's home. Click on Kentucky.
- Scroll down and select the FRG from the list of units listed for that location. You can narrow the search if the list is long.
- In the dropdown of the next page, set the "I am subscribing as a" drop down to "Family Member."
- Enter the Family Member's first and last names and then the Soldier of Interest's first and last names and the last four digits of the Soldier's SSN. Note, the Family Member's name must appear exactly as it was entered in the Sponsor list. Too, the Soldier's name must appear exactly as it was entered into the Soldier Database.
- Fill in the account information for the Army FRG web site.

The Chain of Concern

"One People, One Family, One Team"

Separation is never easy for either the service member or the Family. The army recognizes this and continues to try to reduce the level of stress felt by Army Families and to help them become more self-sufficient and self-reliant. In 1987, the Department of the Army took a giant step forward when it issued a regulation implementing command-supported Family Readiness Groups (FRG).

These Mandated Family Readiness Groups are to be sponsored by every unit. They are a part of the commander's program, and every Soldier (all ranks in the unit and his/her Family members are automatically a part of the group. Each unit commander is responsible for developing how the unit's Family Readiness Group will function, so each FRG is a little different. Nevertheless, the principal purpose of each remains the same: To establish a system for the unit's Family members to receive information, to obtain assistance with solving problems and to find support during times of stress.



The Phone tree/Chain of Concern

The Phone tree is an important feature of Family Readiness Groups (FRG) and is a network for communication and support among Family members. In order for this network to be established, the unit needs to learn: who and where the Family members are; their telephone numbers; and any special needs, skills or concerns. This information is strictly confidential, but essential for contacting and assisting Family members should the need arise. Each unit divides into groups, preferable groups with in the same geographic location, for easier information dissemination. A Phone tree contact person (POC) leads each group. A small pyramid, or "Chain of Concern", comprised of these groups is then established.

At the top of the "Chain of Concern" is the FRG Leader. When the FRG Leader receives information from the unit to pass down the chain, she/he calls those on the next level of the pyramid, who call their contacts. Each of them calls everyone in their group and, thus, the information is passed quickly to all the unit's Family members.

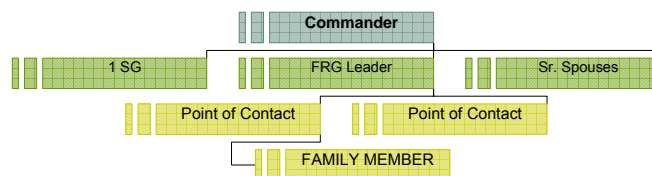
Each group's contact person passes information both up and down the chain. In addition to calling everyone

when information needs to be passed down the chain, the contact person also stands ready to offer support for the groups' members. The contact person may not personally be able to solve all the problems that are brought to their attention, but they can be an important source of information by directing Family members to where they can receive help.

Family Readiness Groups can be more than just conduits for information and questions. They can serve to bring people with common interests together during times of separation, and facilitate a network of support in a time of stress.

Going "UP" Your Chain of Concern

Knowing your chain of concern will help accurate information flow both ways.



THE COMPANY FAMILY ROOM

The Company Family Room provides entertainment to Families while at Headquarters.



Tables for children to read and color



Mats for naps



Mat to play on



Television and movies to watch



Toys to play with



Magazines for adults

RESOURCES



Phone book

Army Community Service

Employment Readiness

502-624-8855 Bldg 1109 Rm 133, Resume Preparation, Application Assistance, Assessment and Career Planning, Job Vacancy Information

Army Family Team Building

502-624-8300 Bldg 67, Family Readiness, Self Reliance, and Leadership Training

Army Family Action Plan

502-624-8300 Bldg 67, Quality of Life Issues, Total Army Family

Sexual Assault Prevention and Response

270-352-8185 24/7, Advocacy, Information, Resources, and Support

AMERICAN RED CROSS

Serving the Greater Fort Knox, KY Military Community

Senior Station Manager: May Giulitto

Administration Assistant: Jerry Fasset

Fort Knox Red Cross Office

1131 Fifth Ave PO Box 996

Fort Knox, KY 40121

(502) 624-2163 (0800-1630 / Mon-Fri)

Toll free: 1-877-272-7337 (24/7)

Families residing outside Fort Knox area

Toll free 1-877-272-7337 (24/7)

Local Red Cross Chapter

www.redcross.org



Red Cross Messages don't guarantee Soldier travel

FINANCIAL AID

Defense Military Pay Office

Fort, Knox KY 40121

502-624-6046

AER at Fort Knox, KY

(502) 624-1996

Alison A. Dupont

Ass't Army Emergency Relief Officer

All financial aid is processed through Army Emergency Relief (AER)

AER may require a Red Cross message for a Soldier's approval of a loan amount

TRICARE

TRICARE Regional Office South:
1-800-554-2397 (Toll Free)

TRICARE Regional Office North:
1-866-307- 9749 (Toll Free)

TRICARE Regional Office West:
1-866-558-1746 (Toll Free)

TRICARE Regional Office Overseas:
1-800-TRICARE

<http://www.tricare.osd.mil/>

Rear Detachment Operations

Key personnel

Chaplain (MAJ) Harlow
502 624-1354

Chaplain (CPT) Perez (alternate)
502 624-5255








Chaplain (MAJ) King
(Family Life)
502 624-5225

Duty Chaplain (24 HR Chaplain Assistance)
Call IOC at 502-624-2707 or 5151

Chaplain Family Life Center (CFLC)
Longer Term Counseling Available (624-5225)
8th Arm Div Rd Bldg. 4786
Hours 0900-1700



Waiting Spouse/Hearts Apart

-  Support from other waiting spouses
-  Activities
-  Educational Opportunities
-  Free Child Care
-  Get Aways and Shopping Trips
-  Meet every second Wednesday of the month
-  Contact ACS at 502-624-6291/3278



FT KNOX NUMBERS

Armor Hotline (502) 624-TANK (8265)/DSN 464-TANK
Commercial/FTS 624/626-xxxx
Duty Hours Daily Mon-Fri 7:45 am - 4:30 pm
DSN 464/536-XXXX
Post Locator (502) 624-1141

Airline Ticket Office(Carlson Wagonlit,
Official) (502) 942-3191
American Red Cross (502) 624-2163
Army Community Service (502) 624-
6291
Army Emergency Relief (502) 624-6291
Army Family Team Building (502) 624-
8300

Automotive Craft Shop (502) 624-5410
Banking Service

- Fort Knox
 - Federal Credit Union
(502) 942-0254
- Armed Forces Bank
 - Community Center
Branch (502) 942-0199
 - Armor School Branch
(502) 942-0268
 - PX Branch (502) 942-
2204

Barber Shops

- Main PX (502) 942-3817
- 5929 Alsace (502) 942-6873
- 2013 Eisenhower Ave (502) 942-
1332

Beauty Shop Main PX (502) 942-0766
Billeting/Guest Houses

- Reservations (502) 943-1000

Bowling Centers

- Houston (502) 624-4740

Camp Carlson (502) 624-4836
Chaplain, Staff (502) 624-5255
Child Care Center (502) 624-6706
Civilian Locator (502) 624-3429
Clubs

- Leader's Club (502) 942-8332
- Rocker II (502) 942-0409

Commissary (502) 624-5355
Dental Clinics

- Ireland Army Hospital (502) 624-
9670
- Jordan (502) 624-7313
- Thomas (502) 624-8117

Dry Cleaning/Laundry
Exchange -Main PX (502) 942-8370
Alsace (502) 942-0340
Eisenhower (502) 624-0499
Education Center (502) 624-4114
Equipment Checkout Center (502) 624-
2314
Family Housing (502) 799-6550
Garbage Disposal (502) 624-4246
Gas Stations

- Wilson Rd (24 Hours) (502)
942-4262
- Chaffee Ave (502) 942-4257

Lindsey Golf Course (502) 624-2717
Hansen Community Center (502)624-1838
Hansen Gallery (502)624-3802
Hospital Appointments 1-800-493-9602
Household Goods (502) 624-3927
Hunting/Fishing Permits (502) 624-7311
ID Cards (502) 624-1667
In-Out Processing (502) 624-1841
Installation Operations Center (502) 624-5151/2806
ITR (502)624-5030
Legal Assistance (502) 624-2771
Libraries

- Armor School (502) 624-6231
- Barr (502) 624-5351
- MOS Library (502) 624-8643

Military Clothing Store (502) 942-4254
Military Police Desk Sergeant (502)624-2111
Military Post Locator (502) 624-1141
Newspaper

- The Turret, Editor (502) 624-1211

Olive Theater (502) 942-4284
One-Stop In-out Processing Center (502) 624-1871

- DFAS (Travel) (502) 624-8546

Outdoor Equipment Rentals (502) 624-4725
Patton Museum (502) 624-2334
Physical Fitness Centers (502)624-8180

- Natcher Center (502) 624-8169
- Gammon (502) 624-4033
- Otto (502) 624-3316
- Smith (502) 624-3641

Post Exchange

- Main Exchange (502) 942-0067
- Food Court (502) 942-4269
- Mini Mall (502) 942-4264

- Class VI (502) 942-4208

Recycle Center (502) 624-5026
Restaurants

- Burger King (502) 942-4281
- BK Express (502) 942-4231
- Food Court (502) 942-4269
- Anthony's Pizza (502) 942-7484
- Mobile Canteen (502) 942-7484
- Godfather's Pizza/ Taco John's (502) 942-7484
- Leonard Exchange Studio's (502) 942-8282

Shoppettes

- Wilson Road (502) 942-4262
- Main PX (502) 942-0067
- Chaffee Ave (502) 942-4257

Post Office (502) 942-1242
Schools

- Fort Knox Schools (502) 624-2345

Skeet Range- French SAhooting Club (502) 624-7754
Soldier & Family Assistance Center (SFAC) (502)624-4761
Swimming Pools

- Anderson Indoor Pool (502) 624-6217

Taxi Service (commercial) (270)351-7373/2227

Thrift Shop (502) 942-8019

Transportation - Household Goods (502) 624-3927

TRICARE 1-877-TRICARE

Veterinary Services (502) 624-5819

Vehicle and Weapons Registration (502) 624-3939

Visual Information (502) 624-3725

Youth Center (502) 624-6442

Youth Sports (502) 624-4747

Fort Knox Specific Weblinks and Resources:

3^d ESC

<http://www.3esc.army.mil/main/>

AAFES

www.aafes.com

Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers:

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=66>

Camp Memorial Blood Center

www.militaryblood.dod.mil/knox

Child Development Center

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=8>

CYS Family Child Care

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=17>

Fort Knox ACS

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=28>

Fort Knox Community Schools

<http://www.am.dodea.edu/knox/FKCSC/O/index.htm>

Fort Knox Lodging

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=63>

Instructional Services / Skies Unlimited

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=15>

MWR Recreation Services:

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=44>

One Knox

www.oneknox.com

School Age Services

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=13>

School Liaison Services

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=11>

Youth Services

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=16>

Youth Outreach Services

<http://www.knoxmwr.com/template.asp?id=14>

Fort Knox Specific Exceptional Family Member Program Weblinks and Resources:

MILITARY HOMEFRONT

WEB SITE:

www.militaryhomefront.dod.mil/efm

SERVICES: A resource for military families with special needs.

MILITARY ONE SOURCE

PHONE: Stateside: 1-800-342-9647

Overseas: 800-3429-6477

TTY/TDD: 1-866-607-6794

EN ESPANOL, LLAME AL: 1-877-888-0727

WEB SITE:

www.militaryonesource.com

User ID: military/Password: onesource

SERVICES: "No question too small. No issue too big. Available 24/7"

MILITARY CHILD EDUCATION COALITION (MCEC)

WEB SITE: www.militarychild.org

SERVICES: A nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that promotes partnerships and provides for networking of military installations and their supporting school districts. Their focus is to address transition and other educational issues related to the military-connected child, including active duty, National Guard, and Reserves. MCEC seek to include

all military installations, their supporting schools, concerned organization, and caring individuals.

**SPECIALIZED TRAINING OF
MILITARY PARENTS (STOMP)**

ADDRESS: 6316 South 12th Street,
Tacoma, WA 98465

PHONE: (253) 565-2266 (v/tty) or 1-
800-5-PARENT (v/tty)

FAX: (253) 566-8052

WEB SITE: www.stompproject.org

SERVICES: Provides information about parent rights and responsibilities in achieving special education services for military children whether located in the United States or overseas. They also assist military Families in accessing resources for their children by enabling them to navigate a variety of educational and medical systems/programs, both military can civilian, regardless of their current duty station/location.

**SERVICES AVAILABLE ON FORT
KNOX**

**EXCEPTIONAL FAMILY MEMBER
PROGRAM**

ARMY COMMUNITY SERVICE

POC: Charlotte Peterson

ADDRESS: Bldg. 77 239 Binter Street

PHONE: (502) 624-6291 **DSN:** 464-
6291

SERVICES: Information, referrals,
advocacy

**FORT KNOX COMMUNITY SCHOOLS
DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES**

POC: Dennis Labriola

ADDRESS: 281 Fayette Avenue

PHONE: (502) 624-2345 ext. 36

SERVICES: Educational services are
offered to children ages 3-21 years.

**IRELAND ARMY COMMUNITY
HOSPITAL**

ADDRESS: Bldg. #851, 289 Ireland
Avenue

POC:

SERVICES: Provides medical case
management services for children and
youth who are enrolled to the hospital as
Tricare Prime, ages – birth to 18 years
old.

**EDUCATIONAL AND
DEVELOPMENTAL INTERVENTION
SERVICES (EDIS)**

ADDRESS: Ireland Army Community
Hospital

Bldg. # 851, 289 Ireland Avenue
4th Floor, Room 6-62

PHONE: (502) 624-9552

SERVICES: Offers evaluations and
home programs for children with special
needs ages zero to 3 years old.
Families must live on Fort Knox or be on
the waiting list for on-post housing.

NEW PARENT SUPPORT PLUS

ADDRESS: Army Community Service,
Bldg #77, 239 Binter Street

PHONE: (502) 624-6291/8391 **DSN:**
464-6291/8391

POC: Shelley Roby, RN

SERVICES: A voluntary program for
Families with children, prenatal to 3
years old. Provides in-home services
that include role modeling and
mentoring, pregnancy and parenting
education, playgroups and referrals as
needed to military and civilian agencies.

ARMY SCHOOL LIAISON SERVICES

POC: Melinda Roberts

PHONE: (502) 624-2305 **DSN:** 464-
2305

SERVICES: School transition support;
Home school linkages; Post secondary
Education Opportunities; School &
Military Information; Partnerships in
education

**STATE RESOURCES & OTHER
LOCAL GROUPS**

STATE OF KENTUCKY

WEB SITE: www.kentucky.gov

SERVICES: Official web site for
Kentucky. Use the Quick Links option at
the top of the web site to locate specific
information.

LOCAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS: Call the
director of special education at a local
school or the *state's office of
Exceptional Children Services for a local
POC*. Some schools have Family
Resource and Youth Service Centers
and/or Special Education Parent

Resource Centers
PHONE: (502) 564-4970
POC: Jan Richards

**COMMUNITY COLLEGES,
TECHNICAL SCHOOLS, COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES:**

Each school, technical school, college or university has Disability coordinators.

WEB-SITE: www.kctcs.net

SERVICES: Provides information on community colleges, universities and technical schools.

**PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY
(P&A)**

ADDRESS: 100 Fair Oaks Lane, Third Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601

PHONE: (502) 564-2967; Toll free: (800) 372-2988; TTY: (800) 372-2988

FAX: (502) 564-0848

WEB-SITE: www.kypa.net

SERVICES: Legal advocacy for individuals whose rights have been violated due to disability. P&A operates five federally mandated advocacy programs and provides information and referral services. Under each of the five advocacy programs, a limited number of individuals whose rights have been violated due to disability may receive representation.

OTHER LOCAL GROUPS

**KENTUCKY PARTNERSHIP FOR
FAMILIES AND CHILDREN**

ADDRESS: 207 Holmes Street, 1st Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601

PHONE: (502) 875-1320 & Parent toll free # 1-800-369-0533

FAX: (502) 875-1399

E-MAIL: kpfc@kypartnership.net

SERVICES: Supports children and families through support groups and community resources. Provides a quarterly newsletter to professionals and families. Provides annual training on issues such as, Surviving Challenging Behaviors, Educational Advocacy, Adolescents, Partnering, etc.

**KENTUCKY SPECIAL PARENT
INVOLVEMENT NETWORK (KY-SPIN)**

ADDRESS: 10301-B Deering Road,

Louisville, KY 40272

PHONE: Toll free – 1-800-525-7746 & (502) 937-6894

FAX: (502) 937-6464

E-MAIL: spininc@kyspin.com

SERVICES: Seeks to empower and support individuals with disabilities and their families to effectively advocate for and access needed information, resources and support networks in order to enhance the quality of their lives.

They serve individuals with disabilities, their parents/Family members and professionals with all types of disabilities and all age groups. KY-SPIN, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization .

**KENTUCKY COUNCIL FOR
CHILDREN WITH BEHAVIOR
DISORDERS**

WEB-SITE:

<http://ebd/coe/uky.edu/kyccbd>

SERVICES: The Kicked is a state sub-division of the Council for Children with Behavior Disorders and the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) This is a membership organization, but visitors to their web-site should find useful information related to children with behavior disorders. They promote support networks for parents and professional. Promoting quality services for children and youth. Advocating for children and youth, their families and professionals.

**LEARNING DISABILITIES
ASSOCIATION OF KENTUCKY, INC.**

ADDRESS: 2210 Goldsmith Lane #118, Louisville, KY 40218

PHONE: (502) 473-1256 or 877-587-1256

FAX: (502) 473-4695

E-MAIL: LDAofKY@yahoo.com

SERVICES: A non-profit organization of individuals with learning differences and attention difficulties, their parents, educator, and other service providers. Goals are: To embrace the challenge to educate the general public on the characteristics of learning disability, attention deficit disorder, dyslexia, etc. To support parents of the individuals with learning differences through information sharing and support. To

make available to professionals information that will assist them as service providers. To provide direct services that will assist those who learning differently become more productive, independent, and self-motivated contributors to society. *A chapter of the Learning Disabilities Association of America.*

FEDERAL RESOURCES & OTHER NATIONAL GROUPS

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH (NIMH) NIMH CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH

WEB-SITES: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/> & <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/information/childmenu.cfm>

ADDRESS: Public Information and Communications Branch
6001 Executive Boulevard, Room 8184,
MSC 9663, Bethesda, MD 20892

PHONE: Toll free: 1-866-615-6464

TTY (toll free) 1-866-415-8051

FAX: 301-443-4279

E-MAIL: nimhinfo@nih.gov

SERVICES: NIMH is part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), a component of the U.S. Department of

Health and Human Services. Information is available on a wide variety of mental health issues that affect children and youth. They also conduct research in collaboration with other agencies.

CONDUCT DISORDERS.COM

WEB-SITE:

<http://www.conductdisorders.com/>

SERVICES: A group of parents who are raising challenging children. "Our kids have many different diagnoses, but all of them are oppositional and resistant to parenting. It is our goal for our web site to be a 'soft place to land for the battle-weary parent.'"

CHILDREN /ADULTS HAVING ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER (CHADD)

ADDRESS: 8181 Professional Place,
Suite 150. Landover, MD 20785

PHONES: Business: (301) 306-7070
National Resource Center on AD/HD: (800) 233-7070

FAX: (301) 306-7090

WEB-SITE:

<http://www.chadd.org/webpage.cfm?catid=2>

SERVICES: A non-profit organization serving individuals with AD/HD and their families, professionals and others. Offers information, public advocacy, and support.

Other Useful Websites and Resources:

American Legion Support Network:
www.legion.org

American Red Cross:
www.redcross.org

Army Emergency Relief:
www.aerhq.org/

Army Family Liaison Home Page:
www.aflo.org

Army Family Team Building:
www.aftb.org

Army Knowledge On-Line (AKO):

www.us.army.mil

Army Reserve:
www.army.mil/usar

Army Reserve Benefits:
www.goarmyreserve.com/benefits.htm

DEERs FAQ's:
www.tricare.osd.mil/deers/

Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS)
www.asafm.army.mil/DFAS

Department of Defense (DOD):

www.defenselink.mil

Defense Switched Network (DSN)
Directory:
www.krccs.com/dsmdir/DSN02IDX.HTM

Department of Veterans Affairs (VA):
www.va.gov

Employer Support of the Guard and
Reserve:
www.esgr.org

Communication Tips in times of crisis:
www.mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/childrenAnxiety/

Family Readiness Information:
www.armycommunityservices.org/home.asp
or
www.arng.army.mil/Soldier_resources/default.asp?ld+37

Family Readiness Toolkit and related
links/Info:
www.defenselink.mil/ra/Family/toolkit/

Free Calling cards from the VFW:
www.operationuplink.org/

ID Cards/DEERS/RAPIDS:
www.dmdc.osd.mil/

Internal Revenue Service (IRS):
www.irs.gov

Leave and Earnings Statements (LES)
online:
<https://maypay.dfas.mil/mypay.aspx>

Lifelines:
www.lifelines.com

Military Assistance Program MAPsite:
www.dod.mil/mapsite

Military One-Source:
www.militaryonesource.com

Military Periodicals:
<http://dizzy.library.arizona.edu/users/critzl/militaryperiodicals.htm>

Military Saves
<http://www.militarysaves.org/>

Military Students:
www.militarystudent.org

My Army Life:
<http://www.myarmylifetoo.com>

Reserve Affairs (Office of Assistant
Secretary of Defense):
www.defenselink.mil/ra/

Tragedy Assistance Programs for
Survivors, Inc. (TAPS):
www.taps.org

Tricare:
www.tricare.osd.mil

Scholarship Information for Military
Children:
www.fisherhouse.org



CHECKLISTS

In the case of deployment, there are many things that need to be taken care of before the departure.

SOLDIER'S CHECKLIST

Automotive:

- _____ Proper periodic maintenance up-to-date (oil change, lubrication, tune-up, fluid levels)
- _____ Equipment in good condition (brakes, tires, battery, lights)
- _____ Insurance policy adequate (liability, medical, uninsured motorists, damage to automobile)
- _____ Road service policy (if desired; provides assistance with flats, lock-outs, and other emergencies)
- _____ Vehicle registration/license (on post and state) and renewal dates current/known
- _____ State annual safety inspection current and renewal date known
- _____ Driver's license for spouse current and renewal date known
- _____ Spouse has automotive papers (tire warranty, battery guarantee, insurance policy, road service card)
- _____ Spouse has automobile information: warranties/guarantees in effect and from whom; correct tire pressure and how to inflate and check tires; oil to use and how to fill and check dipstick; gasoline to use; where to go for maintenance and repair services; how to get emergency road service; where car keys and spares are located
- _____ Spouse familiar with bus routes and alternative transportation in case the family car is out of service

Family:

- _____ Unit has the complete current address and telephone number for your family, along with the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of one or two relatives, neighbors, or friends who will know where your family is living (if you do not have a phone, list neighbors' numbers)

Make sure spouse has:

- _____ Name, address, and telephone number of your landlord or mortgage company
- _____ Names, addresses, and telephone numbers for your commander, Army Community Service Center, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator, rear detachment commander, and Family Readiness Group representatives

Soldier's Checklist—Page 2

- _____ Current ID cards for each member of your family (check expiration dates)
- _____ Keys (house, car, garage, personal storage company, safety deposit box)
- _____ Marriage certificate
- _____ Birth certificates
- _____ Insurance policies (life, home, automobile)
- _____ Family social security numbers
- _____ Deeds and/or mortgage papers
- _____ School registration papers
- _____ Proof of service documents
- _____ Copies of orders and all endorsements
- _____ Shipping documents and/or household goods inventory
- _____ Court orders for support and custody of legal dependents
- _____ Unit mail card

And if appropriate:

- _____ Naturalization papers
- _____ Divorce decree and separation agreements
- _____ Adoption papers
- _____ Death certificate

Financial:

- _____ Class EE Savings Bond allotment applied for (if desired)
- _____ Bank or credit union accounts in both names with an “or” rather than an “and” between the names (checking, savings, and any other accounts)
- _____ Spouse has account number, bank books, checkbooks, ATM card
- _____ Spouse has credit cards, bills, information on amounts due, and when and how to report lost cards
- _____ Spouse knows amounts due on loans, monthly payment dates, addresses and phone numbers of loan companies
- _____ Spouse is aware of savings bonds and securities owned, where they are, and how to gain access to them if needed

- _____ Spouse has a signed release from the soldier to pick up a copy of LES
- _____ Spouse is aware of all bills that need to be paid routinely, with address and telephone number for each (rent or mortgage, car payment, telephone, electricity, appliance/furniture payments, water, credit cards, garbage collection, all types of insurance, debt repayment, cable television, dues and subscriptions, and so on)
- _____ Spouse has access to copies of state and federal income tax returns for the last five years; the name, address, and telephone number of the person or company who helped you with your return last year, along with information, forms, and tax deductible receipts for the current year
- _____ Spouse knows where to go for financial assistance in times of crisis: Army Community Services, Army Emergency Relief, rear detachment commander, Family Assistance Center, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator

Legal:

- _____ Spouse has the name, address, and telephone number of your private or military attorney or legal advisor
- _____ You and your spouse have current wills to specify how you want your property handled and distributed in the case of the death of either
- _____ If needed, spouse has Power of Attorney giving him or her the right to sign your name and do the things you could do if you were actually present; may be specific or general
- _____ Spouse has copies of all insurance policies, along with the name and telephone number of your insurance agents
- _____ Spouse has information on where to go for legal aid: Legal Assistance Office, rear detachment commander, Family Assistance Center, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator

Medical:

- _____ Spouse has family medical cards/knows how to get medical records
- _____ Spouse has family immunization records; shots are up to date
- _____ Spouse knows medications/allergies of all family members
- _____ Prescriptions (medical and optical) are readily available
- _____ Rear Detachment Officer/ACS knows of family members with special needs, Exceptional Family Member Program, or chronic medical condition

TO THE SPOUSE

Once a unit has deployed, it is too late to realize you need your spouse's signature or don't know where things are or how important tasks are done. These problems can easily be avoided. The best solution is to be totally prepared.

True family readiness comes from a series of minor tasks accomplished well in advance rather than a sudden "crash" program begun after receiving an unexpected deployment notice. Last-minute rushing produces needless family worry and stress. It causes many parts of the family readiness plan to be left undone.

By looking ahead and anticipating the likelihood of a deployment, you and your loved ones can adequately plan for this separation. Remember, once your soldier has been deployed, the responsibility for your family transfers directly to you. Ultimately, you are responsible for knowing your rights and privileges and what resources are available to you as an Army spouse.



SPOUSE'S CHECKLIST

- _____ Take AFTB classes
- _____ Get to know community resources, services, and locations

Automotive:

- _____ Get automobile key (and spares)
- _____ Get garage key (and spares), if applicable
- _____ Have oil changed, new oil and air filter installed, and car lubricated; know the mileage reading when the oil should be changed next
- _____ Make sure all fluid levels are up to normal (oil, transmission fluid, brake and steering fluid, water); know how to check and fill them yourself (if needed) and what gasoline to use
- _____ Make sure all vital equipment is in good condition and working order (including brakes, tires, battery, belts, hoses, headlights/high and low beams, tail lights, brake lights, turn signals)
- _____ Review your insurance policy to make sure it provides adequate coverage (liability, medical, uninsured motorist, damage to your car and others); know the renewal date, cost of renewal, who to contact to renew the policy (name, address, and telephone number)
- _____ Investigate a road service policy (if desired) to provide assistance with flat tires, towing, stalled engine, being locked out of your car, and other emergencies; know what your policy covers, when it expires and has to be renewed, cost of renewal, who to contact to renew (name, address, and telephone number); know what to do if you don't have this coverage and one of these events happens
- _____ Look into the renewal of state and on-post vehicle registration (year, cost, where to go, what to do)
- _____ Check your state driver's license expiration date, cost to renew, where to go, what to do
- _____ Check your annual state automotive safety check, if required (when it expires, cost to renew, where to go, and anything that may have to be repaired or replaced to pass this inspection)
- _____ Take possession of automotive papers (car registration, safety inspection, tire warranties, battery guarantee, insurance policy and certificate of insurance, road service card); know where they are, what they mean, how to use them
- _____ Learn where to go, who to see or call when you have problems with the automobile (routine maintenance, auto repair, tires, oil changes, and lubrication)

Spouse's Checklist—Page 2

- _____ Learn what alternative transportation is available (on post, car pools, taxis, city buses, friends)
- _____ Prepare a list of automotive “do’s and don’ts” and hints on car care

Family:

- _____ Make sure your spouse’s unit has your name, address, and telephone number, along with the name, address, and telephone numbers of one or more people who will know where you are at all times (even if you travel or move)
- _____ Get the name, address, and telephone number of your landlord, mortgage company, or government housing office
- _____ Get the names and telephone numbers of key members of your Family Readiness Group, your unit’s rear detachment commander and chaplain, Family Assistance Center, Guard or Reserve Family Program Coordinator
- _____ Make sure you have a military ID card for each member of your family
- _____ Get the keys to your house, safety deposit box, personal storage company
- _____ Know when ID cards expire, and have required forms signed by sponsor before departure

Make sure you have (if appropriate):

- _____ Marriage certificate
- _____ Birth certificates
- _____ Insurance policies (life, home, auto)
- _____ Family social security numbers (including your children’s)
- _____ Rental or lease papers (if appropriate)
- _____ Deeds and/or mortgage papers (if appropriate)
- _____ School registration papers (if appropriate)
- _____ Spouse’s proof of military service documents
- _____ Copies of your spouse’s orders and all amendments
- _____ Shipping documents and/or household goods inventory
- _____ Court orders for support and custody of legal dependents
- _____ Unit mail card
- _____ Copy of your most recent allotment request (if appropriate)
- _____ Naturalization papers (if appropriate)—know the expiration date and prepare paperwork in advance

Spouse's Checklist—Page 3

- _____ Divorce decree (if appropriate)
- _____ Adoption papers (if appropriate)
- _____ Death certificates (if appropriate)

Financial:

- _____ Take possession of appropriate bank books, ATM cards, checkbooks, credit union papers or books, credit cards
- _____ Know how to report lost credit cards and how to request replacements. If a credit card is lost or stolen, report it immediately to the issuing company AND the credit-reporting agencies listed in the front of the Resources section of this handbook.
- _____ Make sure you can make deposits and withdrawals with only your signature. If the account shows an “and” between your spouse’s name and yours, it requires both signatures; an “or” ensures you can make deposits and withdrawals in the absence of your spouse. This can be changed only while the soldier is here.
- _____ Keep a list of automatic deposits and withdrawals or payments made to financial accounts (paycheck, insurance, loan, or bill payments)
- _____ Have your spouse apply for a Class EE Savings Bond allotment (if desired and appropriate), and keep a copy of the signed application

Important documents you should have:

- _____ Get a Power of Attorney, unit mail card, and military ID card if you will have to pick up your spouse’s paycheck and/or mail from the unit
- _____ Prepare a list of outstanding payments, loans, and other obligations with due dates, amount owed, who to pay, contact person, address and telephone numbers
- _____ Prepare a list of investments such as securities or bonds with their value, contact person’s name, address and telephone number; know how to cash these in an emergency
- _____ Get copies of the past five years’ state and federal income tax returns and everything needed for the next filing, including due dates and who to contact for assistance in preparing the returns
- _____ Prepare a list of military and community organizations that offer financial advice, counseling, information, and assistance

Spouse's Checklist—Page 4

Legal:

- _____ Get the name, address, and telephone number of your military or private attorney or legal advisor
- _____ Get a Power of Attorney (general or limited) if you will need to sign documents or act on your spouse's behalf during the deployment
- _____ Make sure your will and your spouse's will are up to date and valid
- _____ Get copies of all insurance policies, and find out what is covered and to what extent; get contact person's name, address, and telephone number; ask whether you need a Power of Attorney to file a claim during your spouse's deployment
- _____ Secure a list of military and community organizations that offer legal advice, counseling, information, and assistance

Medical:

- _____ Make sure you have family medical cards for you and your children
- _____ Make sure you have family shot records for you and your children
- _____ Make sure current prescriptions for medicine and glasses or contact lenses are available
- _____ Get a list of military, community, state, and federal organizations that offer medical, mental or emotional, dental, and optical assistance

Security/Safety:

- _____ Request a military or local police crime prevention survey for your home
- _____ Add a "peephole" to at least your front door and adequate locks to all of your doors and windows
- _____ Place your family's name on the Military Police Quarters Checklist (or notify the local police if you live in a civilian community) if your family will be away from home for an extended period
- _____ Install a smoke detector (or check existing detectors) in key areas of your residence (kitchen, bedroom, living room, shop/garage)
- _____ Install a fire extinguisher (or inspect existing extinguisher) in key areas of your residence (also recommended for your automobile)
- _____ Discuss with your family alternate exits they can use to leave your home from each room in case of a fire or other emergency
- _____ Get a list of military and community organizations that offer security/safety advice, counseling, information, and assistance



COMMUNICATION

KEEPING IN TOUCH FROM HOME . . . COMMUNICATION IDEAS

It is important for Family members to share their thoughts, feelings, and information about daily events with their service member while he or she is away. This communication plays a critical role in maintaining an emotional balance for the person who is deployed as well as for those remaining at home. Good communication during separation helps everyone adjust more easily after the Family is reunited.

Letters

Letters and cards are one of the least expensive and most satisfactory ways to stay in touch. Military postal systems are usually set up near the unit. Service members will tell you that it is great to get a letter, card or package from home. It is a good idea to number your letters, as they do not always arrive in the order in which they were sent.

Some ideas to help enhance your long distance communication

- Write the Soldier letters often and supplement with cards when possible
- Ask advice when needed
- Explain problems clearly. If vague and unresolved, your spouse will worry.
- Express appreciation for letters, tapes, etc., mentioning one or two points of special interests.
- Tell of daily activities in an amusing and interesting way.
- Remember the importance of the amount and frequency of expressions of affection.
- Share your feelings as openly and freely as you can without indulging in self-pity.
- Above all, express yourself clearly and unequivocally so he/she will not have to say, "I wonder what was meant by that!" Neither husband nor wife should try to interpret what the other says, read between the lines, or dissect the meanings of letters. If you do not understand, ask questions – otherwise take things at "face value."
- If you have children, have them enclose notes and drawings. Send photos of home, holiday decorations, activities, etc. Give news of the neighborhood, friends, and relatives.



E-Mail

E-mail is an inexpensive way to communicate, and offers almost instant contact. Sending e-mail is convenient for everyone if they have access to a computer. With e-mail you can write a few lines when it is convenient for you and no one needs to worry about time zones or the best time of the day to call. Most Soldiers will have e-mail access when deployed. The wide availability of e-mail during deployments reduces rumors and eases separation.

Army Knowledge Online (AKO)

AKO allows Family members the ability to rapidly access general knowledge about the Army and to keep in touch with their Soldiers across a secure communications channel while at home station or during deployments. Every Family member of a Soldier is eligible for an AKO account/e-mail address. A Family member merely needs to sign in as a new user and request a guest account; their Soldier must serve as their sponsor. Once a Soldier approves a Family member's request, the Soldier and Family member are connected in a trusted sector of cyber space. They can exchange e-mail, chat online, and engage in instant messaging. Moreover, it is free at www.us.army.mil/.

It will also benefit to have an AKO account at the ready if your Soldier is unable to access the more popular email providers.

TELEPHONE CALLS AND MORE= Advice for Stateside Families

Telephone calls are a popular method of communication. When you converse with your loved one, it is calming and exciting to hear their voice and be able to respond instantly. The cost of calling may be prohibitive, though, depending upon the location of your spouse and access to telephones. Also remember that depending on their assigned duty station, Soldiers may not have daily telephone access.



Calls within the US

Frequent calls to your Soldier can put a strain on your budget. Shop around for a less expensive calling plan such as one of the 10-10-xxx services. Another way to save is to purchase low cost per minute phone cards. You may want to determine how much you can afford to spend each

month on phone calls and purchase a card for that amount.

Overseas Calls

Nothing can substitute for the sound of a loved one's voice, which is why overseas calls are so popular. The cost, however, may be exorbitant! Agree before the deployment starts how many times, and when calls can be made. Then budget the money to cover it. When your call is made, have a prepared list of what you want to talk about. Be ready for the unexpected, such as fears and expressions of loneliness. Many long distance providers offer special international calling packages with lower rates for international calls. However, be aware that your long distance rates for calling within the U.S. will probably increase. If you have two phone lines, use one for the U.S. long-distance rates and the other for international rates. Using a telephone company calling card (MCI, AT&T, and Sprint) may be the most expensive way to call home.

Morale and Welfare Calls

The Defense Switched Network (DSN) is a primary information transfer network for the Defense Information Transfer network (DISN). The DSN provides the worldwide non-secure voice, secure voice, data, facsimile, and video teleconferencing services for DOD Command and Control (C2) elements, their supporting activities engaged in logistics, personnel, engineering, and intelligence, as well as other Federal agencies. DSN calls to Family members are frequently referred to as the Morale and Welfare calls. If Soldiers have the

opportunity and DSN is available, they can contact a local (to their home) DSN installation operator and have them transfer the call to a local residence. If the call is long distance from the installation to the residence, Soldiers can use long distance telephone cards through DSN to assist them in placing the call and they are only charged for the cost from the installation to the home. Installation DSN numbers can be found at www.krccs.com/dsndir/DSN02IDX.HTM.

Hearts Apart Morale Calling Program

One way to keep in touch with each other is through a program that the Air Force is calling the Hearts Apart Morale Calling Program. Air Force base operators will permit you to call your deployed spouse once a week. In addition, you get to place the call from home! The call is free of charge, unless you live far enough away from the base that it would be a long distance call to the base operator. (If the call from your home to the base carries a toll, you pay only the cost of the call to and from the base.) You're allowed one call per week, lasting up to 17 minutes. The operator may cut-in at about 15 minutes to give you and your spouse a two-minutes warning. That way you don't get cut off without the chance to say your good-byes.

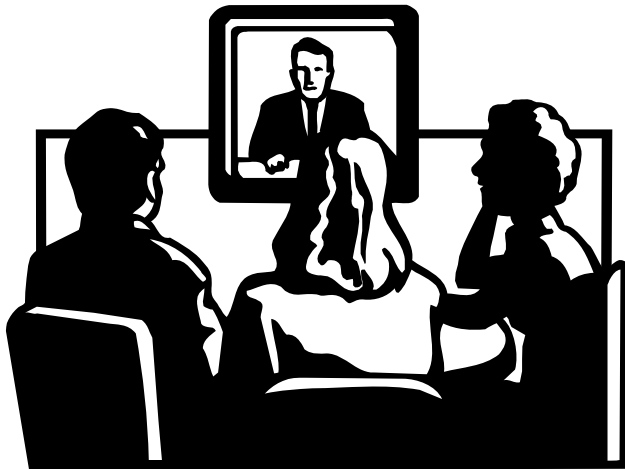
To take advantage of this program you must register through the Family Support Center of the Air Force base closest to your home. You can locate this base by going to www.afcrossroads.com. Take a copy of your spouse's orders and speak to the Family Program Director. You need to know the "DSN" (Defense Switching Network) number for your spouse's unit in order to place these calls.

When you place your call, you will first call the base operator. The Air Force Family Support Center can provide that number. Tell the operator you're placing a Morale Call, who you are, who you're calling, and the DSN number. They'll ask questions so they can log the call.

TELEPHONE CALLS AND MORE

Warning

When using military phone lines you may be cut off without warning for a military priority call. If that happens and you've spoken for less than three minutes, you can retry your Morale Call. You get one call per week; the week is considered Sunday through Saturday. If an emergency arises and you've already used your weekly Morale Call, contact your unit POC.



Video Teleconferences (VTC)

The unit or installation may also have the capability to hold video teleconferences (VTC) where you are able to see your spouse and other members of the unit. Stay in contact with the unit and the FRG. They are the best source of information on what is happening during the deployment and what resources you can access.

Emergency Messages

Sometimes you need a speedier method of contacting the service member, because of a serious illness or injury, a death in the Family, a birth, or hospitalization. Depending on the severity of the situation, there are two ways of sending a message. **First, contact your Unit Point of Contact or FRG for advice.** Once you have sent an emergency message, follow up with a written letter to your Soldier, giving all the details.

Contacting the American Red Cross to Send an Emergency Message

Service members stationed in the United States and their immediate Family members can call the Red Cross Armed Forces Emergency Service Centers for help seven days a week 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The toll-free telephone number is available through base or installation operators and from local Red Cross offices.

Other Family members who do not reside in the service members' household, members of the National Guard and Reserves, retirees and civilians may access Red Cross services through their local Red Cross chapter. Red Cross chapters are listed in the local telephone books and on the American Red Cross Web site at www.redcross.org/where/where.htm.

Overseas personnel stationed on military installations should call base or installation operators or the on-base Red Cross offices. At overseas deployment sites, contact the American Red Cross deployed staff.

When calling the Red Cross to send an emergency message to a Family member, please have ready the following information, which will speed the process of sending you message:

- Service Member's Full Name
- Rank/Rating
- Branch of Service
- Social Security Number
- Military Address
- Information about the deployed unit and the home base unit (for deployed service members only)

For additional information on the American Red Cross or services visit www.redcross.org.

CARE PACKAGES

A "care package" is exactly what it sounds like - a little bit of home that says, "I love you." With a little planning, they can be a great link over the distances. They are also morale builders during deployment.

Mailing Tips

You may want to give this information to your friends and relatives before they send care packages:

- You Soldier may be "on the go" a lot, so try to keep you packages on the light side.
- You will need to fill out a customs form for all packages. Items less than 4 lbs. require the smaller form while items over 4 lbs. need the larger form. Forms are available at all US Post Offices and most post offices don't mind if you want to stock up on them. (You will not need a customs form for letters and cards.)
- Every item is inspected and placed through scanners so be sure to send only allowable items to avoid delays.
- Put any item that could leak or melt in a leak-proof zip-sealed bag.
- Fill any extra space with foam peanuts, bubble wrap or Styrofoam popcorn.
- **UPS WILL NOT ACCEPT PACKAGES ADDRESSED TO APOs AND FPOs.**
- Packages MUST be addressed to a specific Soldier. No "ANY SOLDIER" Packages are allowed.
- Packages can't weigh more than 70 pounds, and must not exceed 108 inches in width or length.
- Do not use wrapping paper and/or string, as it will foul up the postal machines. The post office recommends you use reinforced nylon strapping tape.
- If cookies are not packaged tightly in their container and well cushioned, you might get a letter about the lovely crumbs you sent.
- Put an extra address card INSIDE before sealing the package. If the box should be damaged, and neither address on the outside can be read, it will be opened by the post office. If they cannot find an address, the whole package goes to the dead-letter bin.
- Do not send anything that is highly perishable: there is no refrigeration available in the postal service.
- If you send a package for a special occasion, mail it so it has plenty of time to arrive. Better

a little early than to let them think you have forgotten them.

- Do not send aerosols (shaving cream, deodorants, etc.) or liquids in glass containers.

Care Package Suggestions

Food Items

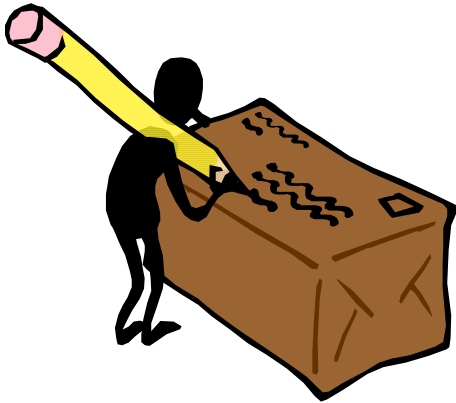
- Sports drinks
- Instant coffee
- Powdered Gatorade
- Powdered hot chocolate
- Kool-Aid (pre-sweetened of course)
- Tea bags
- Baked goods
- Crackers and easy cheese
- Single servings of bagged chips. (The small bags stay fresher longer)
- Gum, Candy, (M&M's are great, anything that won't melt)
- Dry cereal (individual serving boxes stay very fresh)
- Beef Jerky
- Granola bars, power bars
- Dried fruit
- Instant soup
- Spices (onion powder, garlic powder, spice all, etc)
- Oatmeal
- Salsa
- Nuts
- Popcorn balls
- Marshmallows
- Salad dressing
- Fast food condiments (hot sauce, ketchup, mustard, salt and pepper packets, relish mayo)

UNIT ADDRESS

RANK NAME
HHC/3D ESC
APO AE 09391



MORE CARE PACKAGE SUGGESTIONS



Practical Items

- Baby wipes
- Razors, shaving cream
- Shampoo, conditioner
- After-shave lotion
- Liquid hand sanitizer
- Mouth wash
- Deodorant
- Nail clippers
- Cotton swabs, cotton balls
- T-shirts, underwear and socks
- Towels
- Lip balm
- Sun block
- Lotion
- Tylenol or Aspirin
- Chap stick
- Hand held or clip-on fan
- Travel alarm
- Sewing kit supplies
- Dental floss
- Baby powder
- Foot powder
- Combs/brushes
- Tooth brushes
- Breath mints
- Contact lens cleaner
- Shoe shine kit
- Shoe insole cushions
- Eye drops
- Plastic storage bags
- Feminine products
- Phone cards
- Mouse traps
- Tupperware containers (to keep out mice)

Just for Fun Items

- Stress ball
- Stamps, paper, and envelopes with a nice writing pen might inspire a few more letters home
- Paperback books and magazines
- Disposable cameras
- Puzzles
- Film
- Journals
- Yo -Yos
- Frisbees and Hackie Sacks
- Small flash lights
- Jump ropes
- Post cards from your home state
- Handmade items
- Portable CD Players and head sets
- Mini fans
- Jokes and comics
- Single sheet sets
- Games/cards
- If they are gone over a holiday, do up one box with just holiday stuff. Be creative.
- Make a CD of favorite songs
- Make a miniature scrapbook
- Foam footballs and basketballs
- CDs
- DVDs
- School work, kid's art

YOU MUST FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW IN ORDER TO MAIL OVERSEAS.

A rectangular form with a barcode at the top left. The form contains several lines of text and checkboxes, but the text is too small to read. It appears to be a form for providing shipping or contact information for a care package.

FINANCES



Experience with previous deployments and separations indicate some spouses are financially unprepared for their Soldier's departure. The following information can help you overcome many financial obstacles during deployment.



THRIFT SAVING PLAN

During deployment, you can deposit up to \$10,000 in a savings plan that earns 10% interest annually. Deposits can be made by allotment (preferred), check, cash, or money order. Call the Finance office on details in how to participate in this plan.

FINANCE CONCERNS

Finance and Accounting Office (FAO) provides information concerning a Soldier's pay to the rear detachment. If a problem arises such as a non-deposit of funds at the bank, contact your FRG Leader or the Rear Detachment Commander.

ENTITLEMENTS

Entitlements during OIF/OEF deployments can be explained below and are current as of April 2005:

BAS and Separate Rations

Basic allowance for subsistence (BAS) and separate rations are continued for those already receiving it and scheduled to deploy. All Soldiers are entitled to BAS and during deployment, all Soldiers receive it.

Separation Allowance

If deployed for more than 30 days, a Soldier with qualified dependants receives a daily separation allowance. When deployed, separation allowance will be started when the Soldier in-processes downrange. The Separation Allowance begins on the 31st day and is retroactive for the thirty past days of deployment. SEP Allowance for OEF is \$200.

Foreign Duty Pay (SAVED Pay on the LES)

All enlisted Soldiers deployed to an area that qualifies as Foreign Duty receive Foreign Duty Pay according to their rank. SAVED pay for OEF & OIF is \$100.

Hostile Fire/ Eminent Danger Pay

All Soldiers deployed to areas that have been declared as imminent danger or hostile fire zone qualify for danger pay. Hostile Fire pay for specified areas is \$225.

BAQ/OHA

Basic allowance for quarters (BAQ) and Overseas Housing Allowance (OHA) is not terminated if Soldier is deployed.

Per Diem

A per diem is paid for every day a Soldier is deployed. It is the Soldier's responsibility to apply for the per diem once their deployment is over. Past per diems for deployment have been \$3.50/ day—call finance for the current per diem pay upon return.

COLA

The Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) will remain the same as long as the Family member remains in current housing. Should the spouse return to the States for longer than 30 days, on the 31st day the COLA will begin to reflect the Soldier as having no dependants. To revert COLA back to "with dependants", the service member will need to submit a 4187 Form.

For further questions regarding LES or finance questions, call your local Finance Office.

FAMILY MEMBERS FINANCE INFORMATION

Eliminate Credit Cards

Keep plastic money to a minimum. It gives you a false sense of wealth where there really isn't any money.

Allotments

Service members should start allotments for recurring payments prior to deployment. Discretionary allotments are authorized for commercial life insurance, car loans, support of dependents, mortgages, consumer credit loans, and deposit to a financial institution. If you have to take casual pay for any reason such as emergency leave, your allotment will still be secure. This eliminates a surprise shortfall in pay to your Family.

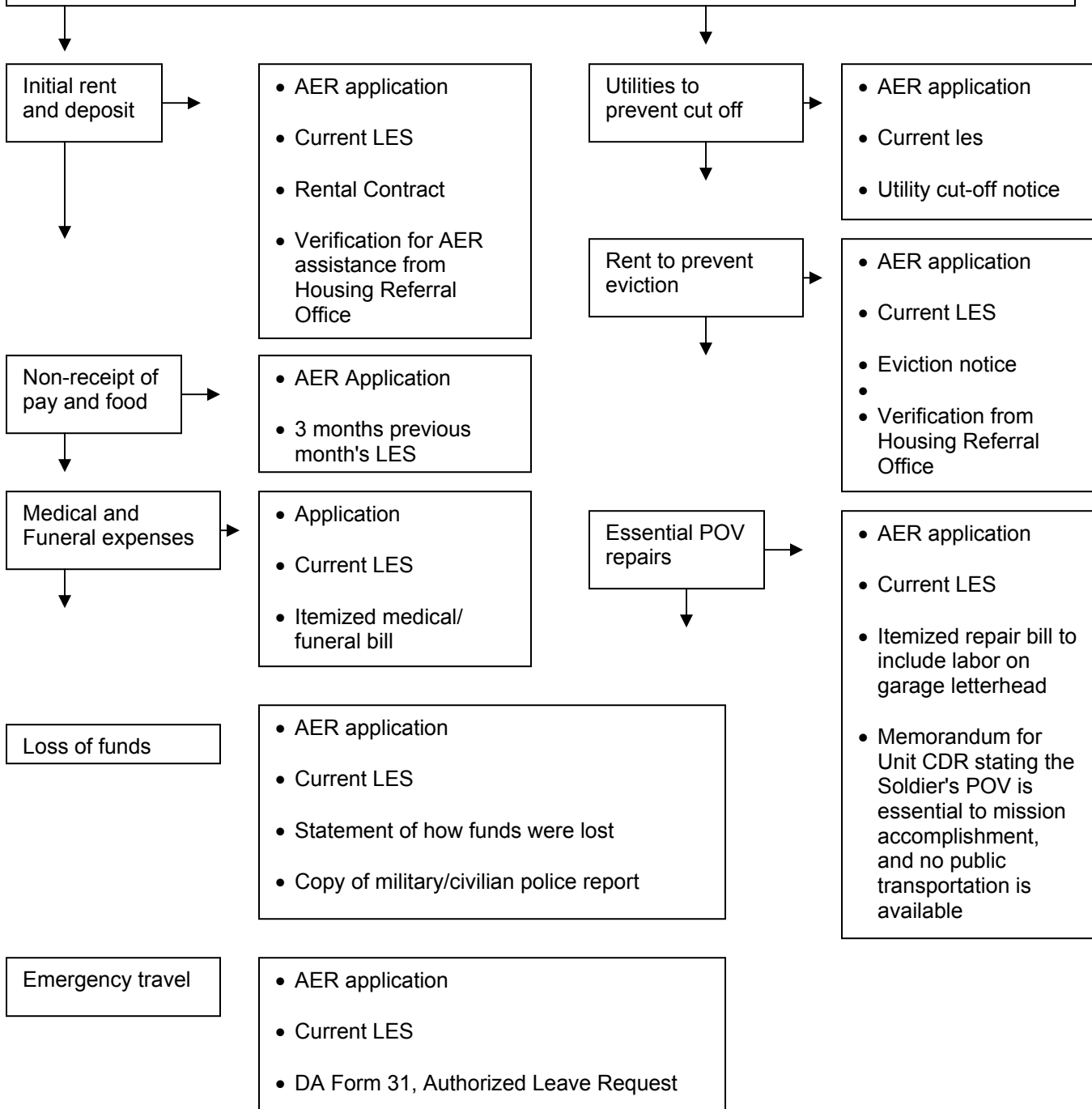
Family members

- Can contact the rear detachment for information on pay.
- Cannot obtain casual pay.
- Should contact the rear detachment commander for information on occasional assistance.
- Can see the Red Cross or Army Emergency Relief (AER) for assistance if a serious problem arises.

HOW CAN I GET EMERGENCY FINANCIAL HELP?

AER LOANS

Army Emergency Relief (AER) can provide financial assistance in the following circumstances:



DEPLOYMENT AND THE PX STAR CARD

While your Soldier is deployed, the military Star Card provides service members whose account is in good standing two options:

Option 1: A 6 percent interest rate and the ability to continue to use the account during the deployment period while making no payments.

Option 2: A ZERO percent interest rate during the deployment period, while making no payments. Under this option, no charges can be made against the account during the deployment period.

Revised Army and Air Force Exchange Service Military Star Contingency Deployment Policy

1. This policy addresses the treatment of Military Star accounts while an AAFES Star account holder or AAFES associate is deployed.
2. Deployment is defined as travel to an overseas location in conjunction with a JCS deployment order. The travel must be for at least 90 days.
3. Unit commanders or their representative will notify the Exchange Customer Contact Center by providing a copy of official orders that reference the JCS message that directs support of a JCS deployment order for the unit or an individual.

NOTE: Requests submitted by individual service members will not be processed. The unit must submit the request.

4. Deployment must be a minimum of 90 days to receive the benefits of this program.
5. No payments will be required for deployed account holders. Additionally, account holders submitted on the deployed listings will automatically have their interest rate reduced to 6%. These customers will still have full charge privileges. If a customer elects to **not** use their account during the deployment, they can receive a 0% interest rate for their duration of the deployment.
6. Customers who prefer not to use their account and receive the additional benefit of a 0% interest rate must contact the Exchange Customer Contact Center by one of the methods listed above. Otherwise, the interest will be 6% and the charge privileges remain intact.
7. If a customer is on Check Verification System hold for returned checks, they will not be able to use the account until the checks are paid.

The intent of this new policy revision is to provide the military customer with a choice in regards to their Star Card Account. If you have questions regarding this policy or want further information, Contact AAFES: 0800-812-4690, www.aafes.com, or CONUS 1-877-891-STAR.



THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW



CAN I TAKE VACATIONS DURING A DEPLOYMENT???

If you leave the area for any reason, it is important that 1) you check the travel advisories in that area and 2) you tell the Rear Detachment Commander and the FRG know where you are. There may be an emergency; either in the field or in the states and the unit could need to contact you.

This is true whether you go to the states permanently, leave for a short visit, or go to another community in Europe to visit with friends or Family.

Use the following form as a guide to what information you should leave when you vacation.

This is to inform you that I will be out of the area on the dates below. I can be reached at the following location:

Name of Spouse: _____

Care of: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Traveling E-mail Address: _____

I expect to return on or about: _____

RED CROSS EMERGENCY INFORMATION

During deployment, if you have an emergency, the Rear D Commander or FRG Leader should be the first person you call for assistance. If neither is available or if you are Stateside, the Red Cross is there to help. If you do not have regular contact with your Soldier, the fastest and most efficient way to notify your spouse of an emergency is through a Red Cross Emergency Message. *You will need specific documentation if requesting your Soldier's return from deployment.* Because emotions can run high during an emergency, have this information at hand before calling your Rear D Co or FRG Leader:

Your Soldier's Social Security Number and rank

Your Soldier's Company & Unit name or where they are deployed to (if you know)
Your Company Commander's rank and name
A description of the emergency & name of the Family member with the emergency
The doctor's name that is treating the Family member with the emergency
The name of the hospital
The phone number where the treating physician can be reached
The phone number where you can be reached

The company commander or FRG Leader should be the first people you call in case of an emergency. If you chose to send a Red Cross message on your own, it is your responsibility to tell the Rear D Commander or FRG Leader immediately afterward. A good team is based on communication.

CASUALTY ASSISTANCE

The military can be a dangerous profession. If there is an incident in which a Soldier is injured, wounded, killed, or missing in action there are specific Army procedures in informing the spouse.

First, do not listen to rumors. If you hear a rumor that either your spouse or another Soldier has been injured, wounded, killed, or missing in action immediately call the Rear Detachment.

Notification of minor injuries on a deployment will probably be made through the RDC, Family Readiness Group, or from a direct call from your husband.

If your spouse is seriously injured or wounded, you will be notified by the chain of command in your husband's unit. Do not be fooled by phone calls from people claiming to be medical personnel informing you that your husband has been admitted to a certain hospital. Unfortunately, during deployments this trick is sometimes used to lure you from your home in order to rob you.

It is important to realize that a death notification will only come from the command of your husband's unit. This notification will be in person. A Soldier in uniform of equal or higher rank usually accompanied by a chaplain will come to your home. Notification will not come from any other source.

After notification of death, a Casualty Assistance Officer will be assigned to you in order to help you manage the benefits to which you are entitled. Don't be afraid to ask questions. The Casualty Assistance Officer is there to answer any questions you may have. If he can't answer your question, he will find an answer for you

The Casualty Assistance Officer will help you make funeral arrangements. The Unit Chaplain or Rear Detachment Chaplain will be there for your spiritual needs and can also assist in funeral arrangements.

The Red Cross can offer specific help in financial assistance concerning the funeral and assist in notification to other Family members serving in the military.

The Army has a commitment in serving you in your time of need.

PERSONAL SAFETY & OPERATIONAL SECURITY

(OPSEC)

Even though Europe seems like a very safe place, reports prove that there are terrorist cells all over Germany. During deployment, it is each person's responsibility to keep their Family safe by staying alert and using good OPSEC. Here are some suggestions on improving your personal safety:

- Use good judgment-- **Do not advertise that your spouse is gone.** Do not place service member flags, yellow ribbons, or "we miss you" signs around your home or on your car. "Support Our Troops" car magnets and stickers are very popular, but will draw unwanted attention to you when on the economy.
- Do your best to blend in while in public. Do not wear American flags or Yellow Ribbon attire.
- Do not discuss your spouse's absence in public, even with friends, because someone with ill intent may overhear you.
- When someone calls on the telephone and asks for your spouse, **never** tell the caller that your spouse is not home. Tell the caller that your spouse is sleeping or can't come to the phone, and offer to take a message.
- If someone calls and claims to be an official military spokesperson requesting social security verification or deployment information, ask them to mail a form to your CMR and you'll return it to them. Then confirm the request with the military agency.

PERSONAL SECURITY

- Keep emergency phone numbers with you when you travel and at home by the phone.
- Always lock your doors and windows; draw your shades at night, and leave a few lights on.
- Leave lights on outside whenever possible.
- NEVER open or crack your door to a visitor who is uninvited or you don't know. Always use your peephole. If they claim to have an emergency, offer to call the MPs for them.
- Do not allow salespeople, repair people, delivery people, or any stranger into your home when you are alone. If you are expecting one, have another person with you, and call the company when the employee arrives.
- Use caution. Remember, neighbors and acquaintances do not come with credentials.
- If you are not certain if someone else may have keys to your home, have the locks changed (consider previous tenants and their friends or neighbors with extra keys).
- Discontinue paper delivery if you will be away. Ask the post office to hold your mail until you return.
- Keep your car in good working order with tune-ups and a full tank of gas. This will prevent your having car trouble and having to depend on strangers for help. Becoming a member of ADAC can give you official roadside help if you ever do have car troubles.

DEPLOYMENT



THE THREE STAGES OF DEPLOYMENT

Military separations include three stages: Pre-deployment, Deployment, and Post-Deployment or Reunion. Each stage carries unique challenges and tasks for Family members. Your Family needs time to adjust to these demands. Learning about deployment will help ease the physical and emotional demands on everyone involved: service member, Family members, parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, and co-workers.

Pre-Deployment: The period of time from first notification of deployment until the Soldier leaves home station

Deployment: The duration of time the Soldier is away from home station

Post-Deployment (Reunion): The period of time beginning with the Soldier's return to home station until Family life returns to normal status

THE EMOTIONAL CYCLE OF DEPLOYMENT

The following cycle describes changes in Family behavior and emotions during deployments:

Pre-Deployment Stage		Separation Stage		Reunion Stage	
Anticipation Of loss	Emotional Disorganization	Stabilization	Anticipation of Reunion	Readjustment	State of Equilibrium
Frustration Detachment Denial Shock Anger Rejection	Despair Irritability Confusion Loneliness Sleeplessness Overwhelmed by Responsibility	Calm Self-assured Self-assured being alone Detachment Confidence	Joy Excitement Apprehension Expectation Hope	Renegotiation of marriage & Family duties Disappointment Ecstasy Change Relief Guilt	Relative Tranquility Shared joy and Responsibility

Feelings exist - they are not good or bad. Therefore, ways of coping can and will vary with each person. Getting ready for deployment starts long before the military member walks out of the door. Many people tend to ignore that the deployment will actually happen; they fantasize that the plane will break down before the military member can get on it, or that something will happen so their spouse does not have to leave. The Family members may try to avoid the recognition of the reality of the departure. Suddenly, a small event, a date, or a commonplace happening will trigger an emotion and/or recognition of the fact that the departure is imminent and real.



THUS, THE CYCLE BEGINS . . . ANTICIPATION OF LOSS

Preparing for the Mobilization

In the days or weeks before leaving, families may experience:

- Difficulty accepting the reality of leaving or separating.
- Feeling an increase in tension; arguments may happen.
- Cramming in of activities/projects - fixing up the house, lawn mower, washing machine, etc.
- Feelings of anger, frustration, and emotional distance between Family members.
- Difficulty with intimacy and sexual relations. It is hard to feel warm and loving when feeling angry at each other: "It's easier just to let him/her go" or an increase in such activities may occur, as clinging, fearing the loss of the lover/support person.
- Symptoms of restlessness, irritability, anxiety, feeling an inability to cope, concern about the changes in the home environment that will occur.
- Women may cry unexpectedly and men may withdraw. Allow this to happen, to an extent, as it is essential to release the varying emotions.
- Some couples deny the forthcoming separation by putting off chores, discussions, not facing the inevitable, and procrastinating.
- Feelings of frustrations with changing deployments timelines.

Your Soldier could also harbor guilt about being *excited* for deployment. Try to understand that as Soldiers, they have been training for deployment their whole career. The upcoming deployment will provide your Soldier a chance to test their skills and be a part of a "real-world" mission.

Detachment and Withdrawal

It's natural for the Soldier & families to both feel:

- A sense of despair.
- A feeling that the marriage is out of control, feeling a desire to separate, to run away to reduce the pain.
- A lack of energy, feelings of fatigue and depression.
- Difficulty in making decisions.
- Ambivalence towards one's partner and sex. It is difficult to be physically intimate when trying to separate emotionally. This should be viewed as a reaction to deployment rather than rejection of each other.
- No longer willing to share thoughts and feelings.

Remember these feelings and events are normal. Your marriage is not breaking up or going down the tubes. While you are both together in the same house, you are

mentally and emotionally preparing for the separation. This is a necessary adjustment to reality.

First, the service member and Family experience a level of shock, then denial. For example, "I won't say anything, because it may get canceled anyway" or "this won't really affect me/us very much" are forms of denial. Anxiety also rises during this period. The initial shock, denial, and anxiety reactions usually last about one to two days, but can linger. Sadness follows the first reactions. Sometimes people use bargaining, such as children saying, "I'll do what you tell me if you don't go." Anger and resentment are common experiences just prior to the member's departure. This reaction makes sense, because it is our human way of adjusting to the loss. Your most likely targets for anger and resentment are the military, your spouse, and your children. We use this to protect ourselves from the pain, so if your partner becomes irritable at this point, try to listen and understand.

You can reflect back to your spouse or children the emotions you notice. For instance, if your spouse seems angry, say "You seem angry." This response gives both of you the opportunity to discuss your feelings about the deployment.

Remember to talk with your children. They are sensitive to changes in their environment. Remember if they aren't told what is happening, they will use their own fantasies to understand. Children are naturally self-centered, so they blame themselves in their thoughts. Talking to them gives them relief and gives them the chance to ask questions so they can try to understand.

Good planning prior to deployment will help alleviate problems and worries. Discuss and arrange responsibilities and household duties before the military member leaves. Get your children involved in planning for the changes you expect during the separation. Try to spend quality time with close Family members before a deployment. Plan a trip or activity, if time allows. It's helpful to have warm thoughts and lasting memories before the service member leaves.

EMOTION DISORGANIZATION



Partners often experience:

- Shock when the deployment actually arrives.
- An initial sense of relief that the pain of saying goodbye is over may be followed by feelings of guilt and emotional turmoil - "If I love him/her, why am I relieved that she/he's gone?"
- Feeling numb, aimless and without purpose as old routines have been disrupted and new ones have not been established.
- Depression and the desire to withdraw from the world, Family, and friends; Jealousy if a friend's Family is still together.
- Feeling of being overwhelmed by responsibility and trying to be everything and to do it all.
- Sleep disruption due to loss of security and the support person; tendency to sleep too much (to escape) or too little. Eating disorders may surface or become worse.
- Feeling anger at the military member for not doing more around the home for safety/security reasons.
- Feeling anger at the military for taking the service member away when you needed him/her most.
- Feeling restless, confused, disorganized, indecisive and irritable at everyone, especially the children.
- Feeling guilty for things that don't (or did) happen before the separation.
- Being "stuck" at this stage can create an unwillingness to move on emotionally and can be detrimental to a healthy adjustment.

Once the service member is gone, a host of emotions and feelings rise. Loneliness, guilt, frustration, feeling overwhelmed, confusion, and fears are most common. Each of these reactions results from the separation, and the Soldier and the Family may experience some or all of them. Loneliness comes from the isolation and the loss. Guilt comes from several sources such as having acted irritable or angry before departure. Frustration and feeling overwhelmed come from the realization of what demands the separation places on you. Confusion is common in younger children. Fears are common in all

people, such as fear of infidelity, fear of abandonment, and fear of loss.

Remaining active counteracts these reactions, as does talking to friends and making use of your social support networks like neighbors, coworkers, friends, and other Family members in similar circumstances.

Listening to your children and avoiding lecturing helps reduce their fears and confusion. Try to keep your children's routines as stable as possible. For instance, keep bedtimes and mealtimes the same. Sometimes children act out their emotions, because they don't have the sophistication to express themselves verbally. They may withdraw, become aggressive, lie, steal, or have nightmares. Some children regress to prior behaviors, such as bedwetting. Some children may have difficulty concentrating; school performance may suffer or they may lose interest in things, or become more impulsive. These are their means to express themselves, and if questioned, they probably will not be able to explain their reasons.

So, what can you do about the changes in a Family member's behavior? Start talking. You can start a conversation with "I've noticed . . ." the most important part of talking to your children will be listening to what they say. You could also ask other parents for advice. If problems persist or are severe, seek assistance through your Family Readiness Group, unit Chaplain, or other professional.

A few weeks after the member leaves, people often experience sleep difficulties, episodes of crying, irritability, and tension. Remaining active, finding a hobby, and focusing on the tasks help you get through this period.

COPING WITH SEPARATION

Deployment periods provide for a time of self-growth. For most families, a deployment isn't the happiest of occasions. Long separations are hard on every member of the Family, especially those left at home. As Army families, we learn to cope. Experience has shown that a deployment is much easier on families if they prepare for it and know the tricks of getting along during separation. Take advantage of the military support. Stay informed - get involved with your FRG. Nobody understands the Army like another Army Family. By following some of these suggestions, deployments might go a little easier for your Family.



Hints for the Family Member

KEEP IN TOUCH! Communicate with the Soldier by e-mail, if possible, AND by writing, even if it is only a post card to say, "I love you and miss you". Soldiers love mail and need to hear from home frequently.

- Contrary to popular belief, in the case of Family separation, "no news can be bad news!"
- Be sure to write regularly and to use the correct mailing address.
- Other address information will be issued by the unit, or if known, at the pre-deployment briefing. FRG contacts will also know this information, if it's published.
- Keep in mind that if your Soldier is far from home...
- Plan ahead.
- Be aware of the possibility of mail arriving late.
- Mail may be slow.
- Money may not arrive according to schedule.
- Important documents may arrive too late to meet deadlines.
- To reduce worries when you haven't heard from your Soldier, you can get information from the FRG on:
 - Where he/she is (if able to be known)
 - How he/she is doing
 - The TRUTH about rumors
 - Their return Home

For information, call your unit Point of Contact or your Key Caller in your Family Readiness Group.

COPING STRATEGIES - THE 4 M's

MAINTAIN

- Stay in good physical condition.
- Eat balanced meals.
- Get plenty of sleep.
- Keep in touch with positive people.
- Avoid things that make you feel worse.
- Avoid spending sprees, but treat yourself to a special outing.
- Don't make any life changes during this time.

MANAGE

- Manage your life. Set goals.
- Start a project that you've put off. Begin a self-improvement program or go back to school.
- Set time to be away from the children so you can take care of yourself.
- Continue your spiritual growth.
- Become involved in community activities that interest you.
- Travel – New scenery and a change of pace can do wonders for the spirit.
- Become a volunteer.
- Know your limits.

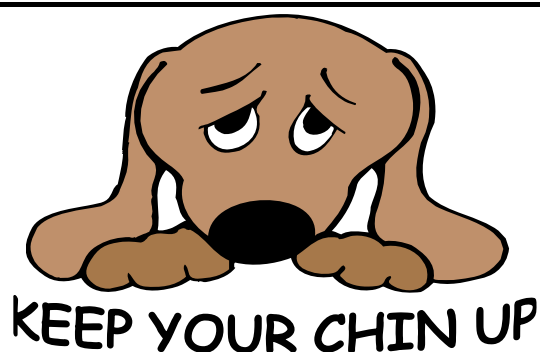
MONITOR

- Be aware of early signs of stress.
- Laugh: Don't lose your sense of humor.
- You are only human – Ask for help if you need it.

MANEUVER

- Relieves stress – try relaxation exercises.
- Use coping strategies that work for you.
- Stop and smell the roses.

THE BLUES AND HANDLING STRESS



When the Blues Get Bluer

Most families find the Holidays, dinner hour and Sunday afternoon the times they miss their Family member the most. In addition, almost everybody has an occasional blue Monday. If your blue days are increasing in frequency, pay attention to what is going on around you and *in* you. Are you:

- Feeling Depressed?
- Losing interest in hobbies or things you enjoy?
- Feeling like you don't have energy to do things?
- Gaining or losing weight?
- Yelling at others or feeling irritable?
- Sleeping in later, having trouble falling asleep, or experiencing frequent awakenings?
- Withdrawing from people?
- Finding it difficult to concentrate?
- Spending a lot of time with your thoughts?
- Drinking more than usual or drinking alone?
- Having thoughts of suicide?

Depression is a side effect of separation that happens to some of us. Some use alcohol and drugs as a remedy, but it doesn't work. Drinking does nothing to answer life's problems.

The cure for depression is the same as prevention. Take positive action. Change your thoughts to change your feelings and reactions. Find something to do, and don't let yourself feel stuck in the house. If you can, talk to a friend. If you're alone, out of sorts, and problems seem overwhelming, seek help through your Family Readiness Group, the Unit Chaplain, or another professional.

If you feel that you are truly unable to handle the stress of deployment and could possibly harm yourself, your children, or another person, **SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP IMMEDIATELY!**

YOU CAN DO IT! When a loved one is away, you also need to get the sense you are moving up and forward. Frustration comes when you see others accomplishing things, while you are immobile, waiting for your Family member to return. If you have met with success before, you can do it again.

HANDLING STRESS

- Take care of yourself.
- Make daily schedules of things that need to be done, but be reasonable.
- Get involved in things that make you happy.
- Avoid self-medication and abusing substances like drugs, alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, and food. Liquor and drugs reduce the perception of stress, and they don't reduce stress itself.
- Be flexible; accept that you can't control everything.
- Plan for stress. Set realistic goals that leave time for breaks and limit work. Take a stress reduction class.
- Keep a sense of humor with you at all times.
- Start thinking about what you really want out of life and begin to work towards those goals.
- Take a mental health day every two or three months.
- Avoid sulking. Let people know what you want.
- Learn how to express irritation and appreciation to others.
- Pick out somebody you work with and tell them something about yourself that you haven't told anyone else.

LIFE DOES GO ON . . . THE SEPARATION AND STABILIZATION STAGE

At about 6 to 8 weeks after the Soldier leaves, people start adjusting to the changes. Family rules, roles, and responsibilities are often realigned and structural changes adapt to the loss. Families find a new level of functioning without the previous ups and downs. Families that don't adjust and cope with the separation could experience greater difficulties at this time. Often someone is feeling depressed. ***If you believe you are suffering from depression or if your Family can't seem to adjust, seek assistance.***

During the Stabilization Stage Most People Begin To:

- Realize at some point, usually midway in the deployment that "Hey, I'm doing OK."
- Establish new Family patterns/interactions that do work for them.
- Feel more comfortable with their situation, self, and the reorganization of roles and responsibilities that does occur.
- Attempt and successfully accomplish some goals, which add to self-confidence and feelings of being able to cope.
- Reach out for support through friends, church, work or spouse groups, etc.
- Eat "cruise food" to save time/energy and to appropriately choose priorities - let some things go to have more time.
- Have higher long distance telephone bills - but must learn to keep within the budget.
- Go through the "my" syndrome: my house, my car, kids, etc.
- Appear more mature and independent as "single" spouses since they have developed new activities and accepted more responsibilities to fill the void, while remaining secure in being married.
- Experience more sickness (at first), as the increased responsibilities tend to be more stressful until healthy coping skills are practiced.
- Feel vulnerable due to isolation from the military member, especially if recently moved to a new area without close friends or Family.
- Spouses may feel uncertain of their abilities to cope and may experience self-doubt.
- Feel asexual - no longer in need of sex or affection; or feel strangled due to suppressed needs and desires.
- Minor crisis can put person back into the disorganization stage.

You have many options to help you through the deployment. Set goals to accomplish during separation. Establish consistent ways to maintain contact, and include the children. Set one night a week aside for Family time. Make sure you give yourself a break each week and allow yourself some privacy. Get involved in activities.

If you feel your energy level is low, do something with a friend, your children, or relatives. Even after the 6 to 8 week adjustment period, mood swings may continue. Recognize that the roller coaster is normal. If you feel your fears of infidelity rising, express to your spouse your trust. When you identify a problem, tell your spouse about it and what you're doing about it.

The most important thing to remember is to establish and maintain frequent contact. Separation from loved ones and significant others can be stressful and may lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation. Encourage your Family to express feelings as early and openly as possible. Especially with children, be sure to offer love and reassurance while discussing future fears or doubts. Keep lines of communication open and use them frequently. The chapter on communication in this Guide has some ideas for ways to communicate. Keeping in touch helps your Family feel togetherness.

Oftentimes a service member will really be missed. Don't try to fill their shoes, just do what you can as a Family or individual. Share responsibilities with others and be fair and realistic. There are only 24 hours in a day! When things get to be too much, don't be afraid to ask for help! Many people such as friends, neighbors, relatives, and your Family Readiness Group would be glad to help.

How are you doing emotionally? Strong feelings are most common before and after separation and reunion, but they can occur any time. To help you maintain your emotional health, consider learning new coping skills such as realization techniques, stress management, or parenting skills.

Balancing emotions and Family relationships during separation is as important as balancing and maintaining control over the household finances. Communicate with your spouse and Family about how you're doing and what help you may need for better stability.

ANTICIPATION OF HOMECOMING

Several weeks or days, prior to the military member coming home, the Family member(s) will begin to feel a sense of anticipation— "He/she's coming home and I'm not ready!" You and your Family will experience anticipation, concern, increased adrenaline, and maybe even a drive for perfection. In anticipation, you may worry about the changes that took place during the separation. For instance, "Will my Soldier be happy with how I handled things?" You may notice differences in your phone conversations. How did you each adjust to your greater independence? The Soldier may wonder if he/she is still needed.

OFTEN LOVED ONES TEND TO:

- Compile a long list of things still left to do and begin to pick up the pace to get things done - a flurry of activity.
- Experience feelings of joy, excitement in anticipation of the military member's return and being together again.
- Experience feelings of fear and apprehension. "Does he/she still love me?"
- Clean the house of activities acquired to fill the void to make room for the Soldier again. Some resentment may be felt at having to give up some of these things, and having to change again.
- Experience uncomfortable feelings - "I want him/her back, but what will I have to give up?"
- Feel tense, nervous and apprehensive - burying fears/concerns in busy work and activities.
- Experience a sense of restlessness again, but this is generally productive. Some Family members may feel confused due to conflicting emotions.
- Put off important decisions until the military member is home again.
- Experience changes in eating and sleeping patterns developed while the Soldier was gone.



CHILDREN HAVE CONCERNS, TOO . . .

"Will my parent be proud of me?" "Will rules change again?" "Will my parent leave again?" "Will I be in trouble for some of the things I did?" Talking about these concerns helps children cope with them. One way to get children to talk about their concerns is for you to tell your children one of your concerns, and then ask them about their worries.

Coping with a Deployment Extension

Overview

Ways to cope with a deployment extension

- ☐ How you may feel
- ☐ Coping as a Family
- ☐ Handling practical matters
- ☐ Taking care of yourself
- ☐ Supporting your service member

A deployment extension is difficult for service members and their families. You've been anxiously looking forward to your loved one's return home only to find that your reunion plans must suddenly be put on hold. While there is no denying that this is a difficult period, there are things you can do to cope as a Family and get through this time together with a positive attitude. That, after all, is what your service member would want you to do.

How you may feel

An extended deployment creates hardship for families. From the moment you receive the news of the extended deployment, you may experience a flood of emotions, including feelings of sadness and disappointment, worry and anxiety;

some feelings of anger; and a sense of betrayal or of promises being broken. Your hopes were up and your spirits were soaring as you thought about your forthcoming reunion. Now you must regroup and gear up for more months of coping as a Family while your loved one is away on active duty. Experts agree

that a deployment extension is often harder on families than it is on service members.

During this difficult time, you may find it helpful to remember the following:

☐ *The emotions you are feeling are normal.* There is no getting around the fact that a deployment extension brings strong emotions and feelings of stress. You may feel flooded with feelings and overwhelmed for days or even a few weeks until you have had time to adjust to the news.

☐ *You are not alone.* Military Family life is a life of constant change. There are schedule changes, Family separations, and extended deployments. Active duty service members understand this reality when they enlist for military life. For Guard and Reserve families, however, a deployment extension can feel more unexpected. The more you talk with others in your situation, the easier this time will be and the less alone you will feel. Participation in Family readiness groups is a good way to stay connected.

Coping as a Family

A deployment extension affects your Family's plans, schedule, and routines. Here are some suggestions on coping during this time:

□ *Give yourself time to regroup emotionally.* Admit to yourself that you are upset.

Your feelings are genuine. They reflect your disappointment and pain. Even though you didn't cause the situation and may feel a bit out of control, try to

Coping with a Deployment Extension

avoid taking your legitimate frustrations out on your friends, relatives, or children, who, like yourself, didn't cause the situation. You might want to take an evening off from your regular activities to do something special for yourself.

It doesn't have to cost a lot of money. It might be visiting a friend you don't get to see much. Getting away for a day or half a day will do you some good.

□ *Help your children handle the news by talking about it with them and offering extra love and support.* Discuss the extension news in an open, honest manner with

your children. Keep your children informed about the change of events and explain what information you have in words your children can understand.

Tell

your child that unexpected changes sometimes happen and that you will keep them up to date on those changes. Reassure your child that you will all be together soon.

□ *Tell your child's teacher about the deployment extension and any updates.*

It's good to keep teachers and other adults in your child's life in the loop.

□ *Share your feelings as a Family.* Allow children to discuss their feelings, questions, and concerns. Encourage any questions they may have regarding the

extended deployment. Listen and do your best to understand.

□ *Get back into a routine as soon as possible.*

□ *Focus on the future by beginning to make new plans.* The deployment extension

changed plans you may have had for a reunion. You may have had a vacation

planned, a special reunion with extended Family members, or a celebration involving close friends and relatives. Some things you will be able to put off; others you may not. You may need to make new plans altogether. When you are ready, organize and plan for a new reunion with your loved one. It will give

you and Family members something positive to focus on.

□ *Keep things in perspective.* As difficult as a deployment extension is, it helps to

keep things in perspective and to remember that many military families face even greater hardships. Some have had a service member return home only to

have him or her be shipped back out to a combat zone for another year's service. As hard as this time is, try to see the light at the end of the tunnel and remind yourself that your wait will soon be over.

□ *Limit exposure to television or other sources of information about the war and its victims.* Especially for children, it can increase feelings of fear and anxiety.

□ *Army personnel (Active, Guard, and Reserve) and their families and Marine Corps personnel and their families in the United States and Puerto Rico are encouraged to take advantage of free, private, face-to-face counseling services in their local communities.* Counselors help adults and children with issues such as marital and Family stress, reunions after deployment, grief, and other common problems associated with military life. You may receive up to six counseling sessions per problem per person, and there are no claims to file. Army personnel and their families contact Army One Source at 800-464-8107. Marine Corps personnel and their families contact MCCS One Source at 800-869-0278.

Coping with a Deployment Extension

Taking care of yourself

Once you have had some time to get used to the news of the deployment extension, and to helping others cope, take some time to focus on yourself.

□ *Give yourself a break to compensate in some way for all you are doing and will need to keep doing in the months ahead.* Have a meal out with a friend. Take a day off of work if you can. Schedule a break for yourself, even if it's just a small treat like having your hair done, or going out for ice cream with a friend.

□ *If you have young children at home, seek support from others so you get a break from parenting.* You were expecting your spouse home any day and were mentally prepared for a break and an extra set of hands around the house. Now you will have to postpone that break several more weeks. To tide yourself over, share babysitting or child care with a friend so you get some relief. Ask a relative to come stay with you for a few days or weeks if possible. Or go visit a relative or close friend with your children.

□ *Keep busy and stay connected to others.* Get together with relatives and friends for potluck dinners, card games, or having a picnic with children.

□ *Talk with people who have been through deployments.* They may have valuable suggestions and helpful ideas on how to get through this time. Talking to someone who has been through it or who is just a good listener always helps you feel better.

□ *Take advantage of the support services and programs available to you through the military.* The military has many support services for families of active duty members. This includes information, counselors, the installation chaplain, Family support groups, online support groups, and organizations and clubs for spouses, such as the Key Volunteer Network. Reserve families should contact their unit Family readiness group or chaplain; they can also utilize all of the services of their nearest installation. Resources and information are available as well through the service that brought you this article.

Supporting your service member through an extension

The best way to support your service member is to stay strong as a Family and to gear up to get through the coming months until you are together again.

☐ *Send a letter or email as soon as possible.* Because you were expecting your service

member home, you may have stopped writing in recent days or weeks. With the extension, your service member may be without mail or word from home. You don't want him or her to go without mail for weeks. So that there isn't a gap of support, send a letter or an email, if possible, as soon as you can.

☐ *Write often to your service member.*

☐ *Make plans for a new reunion.* You might create a new Family calendar counting down the days until your loved one returns home. Share plans about the reunion with your service member. It will give you all something positive to focus on.

Written with the help of Dr. Walter R. Schumm, Retired Army Reserve Colonel and professor of Family studies and human services at Kansas State University.

THE REUNION STAGE **THE LONG AWAITED HOMECOMEING AND THE** **READJUSTMENT PERIOD**

The third and final stage is reunion. This section discusses what you can expect. **Reunion is almost is almost a mirror image of the Pre-Deployment stage.** You may find yourself having the ups and downs starting a few weeks prior to the Soldier's return. The adjustment period also lasts about 6 to 8 weeks, possibly longer. Most military families find that reunions are more stressful than the separation. This is generally true with all military members: couples with children, single parents, and single Soldiers who are coming back to friends and Family.

Re-negotiation of the relationship:

The husband and wife are back together physically, but are not emotionally adjusted to being together. They may feel distant, have trouble sharing decisions, and have difficulty talking to each other.

Couples:

- Need to refocus on the relationship, share experiences, feelings and needs, avoid forcing issues.
- Must stop being a "geographically single" person in a relationship and start being a couple again. Go from independence to interdependence.
- May feel a loss of freedom and independence; may feel disorganized and out of control as "deployment routines" are disrupted.
- Need to renegotiate roles and responsibilities. Family members often feel isolated, unwanted,

unneded and left out during this phase, which can cause arguments and hurt feelings for both partners.

- Need to be aware that too much togetherness can cause friction due to having been apart so many weeks/months.
- Need to begin to share the making of decisions that should be "their" decisions.
- Need to increase their time to talk together and with children. They may want to plan special activities of short duration as a couple and as a Family.
- Need to progress slowly with ardently desired sexual relations that may fall short of expectations. This can be frightening, and produce intense emotions. Couples may feel like strangers and be hesitant at

first about intimate relations. Talk to each other about expectations.

- Need to allow sufficient time to court each other before true intimacy can occur. Get to know each other again!
- May find question threatening, interpreting the questions as being judgmental, not just curious.
- Should return to the “our “ stage (“our” children, “our” house...)

This stage can renew and refresh a relationship, creating new trust and mutual understanding.

Expect To Have Doubts and Worries. . .

Realize that people change, especially children. Increased independence is a positive result of separations. Maintain realistic expectations of the reunion. You may want the first night to be perfect: new clothes, a wonderful meal, and a spotless home. If you strive for perfection, you might end up feeling inadequate, irritated, and tired, because perfection is unrealistic.

- Partners may think the other does not need them anymore. Both may be more confident and independent. They may be afraid of criticism for the way that they have handled things.
- Single parents and single Soldiers may have similar doubts about fitting into the environment to which they are returning. Especially if they have children who have lived with relatives during the deployment.

- Anxiety is a natural and normal part of getting back together.
- Recognize that you will have these doubts, but don't take them too seriously.

Soldiers - - Expectations. . .

Don't expect things to be the same as they were when you left. Some things will change, but much will remain the same. Face it: your Family has had to continue in your absence. They have changed. Their day-to-day routines have changed. In many ways, it's a different Family. If you expect them to be the same, you're in for a rough landing.

- Homecoming is usually not what you expect.
- Take it easy and let things happen naturally.
- Don't count on sexual fantasies being fulfilled.
- Don't try to take over responsibilities immediately. Wean yourself back in slowly.
- Plan a vacation or time away for you and your Family within 90 days of return.
- Take some time to readjust to you home, weather, sleep, television and Family.
- Offer to help when possible with chores and take care of children.

THE READJUSTMENT PERIOD

Accept and Share Your Feelings...

Communicate...Communicate...Communicate

- Sharing requires a lot of talking and listening.
- Active listening means to really listen, not thinking about how to defend yourself or what you'll say next.
- If you need to clarify what was said, repeat it in your own words. When you understand, respond thoughtfully.
- You may have to renegotiate your relationship.
- You have changed; your Soldier has changed; and your children have changed. If you expect them to be the same, you're in for a hard time.
- Do not criticize each other for doing things differently.

Try To See Things from the Other's Point of View...

- Once the Family member realizes that the Soldier no longer feels a part of the Family, they will understand why the Soldier is sensitive about even the smallest changes.
- Once the Soldier sees the Family member's pride in the way he/she handled everything alone, the Soldier will understand why they get upset when the Soldier comes barging in to take over.

These principles apply when dealing with each other and with children.

- Don't push yourself on your loved one.

- Spend one-on-one time with them.
- Be patient.
- Cut them some slack when they're acting up—they are a little stressed out, too.

The returning service member may want things to go back to how they were before the separation. That normally doesn't happen. People grow and change, so the Family structure, while adjusting to the reunion, finds a new level of functioning. The service member may feel like an outcast. For instance, the children may no longer seek the returning parent's advice for help with things. Remember that your Family had to change to survive so give them time and space to readjust. Things and changes will be unfamiliar. You'll need time to get reacquainted.

Intimacy takes time to develop with Family members and friends. Go slow and take time to get to know each other again. Schedule time for a Family activity, dates with your partner and individual time with each child.

Take Time Off From Work to Decompress and Reacquaint, whether Active Duty or Reservist

If possible, it is important for reservists to take some time off between the redeployment and re-entering the civilian workforce. Not only do reservists have to renew their Family relationships, but they must also readjust to the return to work and the changes that have occurred while they were gone. Don't try to do it all at the same time. Prepare yourself for returning to civilian work. It could

be possible that you may not feel the same sense of satisfaction or purpose as they did when deployed. Be prepared for this and other feelings of misplacement.

If problems persist or your Family takes more than 8 weeks to readjust, get help.

State of equilibrium

Reintegration and Stabilization

Sometimes within four to six weeks after homecoming, partners have stopped referring to "my" car, house, kids, and return to using "we" or "our" and military members feel more at home, needed, accepted, and valued.

- New routines have been established and the Family has adjusted to them.
- Both partners are feeling more secure, relaxed and comfortable with each other.
- The couple and Family are back on track emotionally and can enjoy warmth and closeness to each other.

There can be numerous variations to the cycle. Short deployments can be disruptive when there is not enough time to get used to the Soldier being gone or home. Trying to say, "Hello" and "Good-bye" at the same time is especially difficult. Unexpected changes can also be very difficult to deal with for all concerned, for example, when dates for leaving or coming home are ambiguous or unknown.

REUNION TIPS

Reunions are a time of readjustment after separation, whether long or short, planned or unplanned. Reunions can be both joyful and stressful because they are a big change that affects everyone with intense emotions. Roles and responsibilities may never return to "Pre-deployment" status. Plan to discuss responsibilities until roles are clearly defined again. The Soldier needs to understand that the spouse has cared for and managed the household for the entire time of the deployment and that they should not expect to automatically resume the role they had. It would be unrealistic considering the time and effort put into surviving the separation.

Make it Easier for the Children

- Give the children time to adjust. When a parent has been away, it takes a while to remember and accept the parent again. Young children may also be mad at a parent for leaving them. Babies going through the "stranger anxiety" stage may be afraid of a parent they've not recently seen.
- Expect them to test limits and to have a variety of emotions. Plan Family time.
- Plan individual time for the child with the returning parent.
- Children should stay involved with school activities and interests and not drop everything because the Soldier has returned.

Tips for the Spouse who Remained Home

- Expect your Soldier to be different. Think how much you have changed. Do not expect things to be perfect.
- Remember they have been subject to daily regimentation and routine during deployment. The returning service member may rebel against schedules and preplanned events. Leave some room for their spontaneity.
- The returning Soldier might not have been behind a wheel of a car for quite a while. Go ahead and drive for them if they wish.
- Expect them to have difficulty sleeping for a while. The Soldier will have become accustomed to a different life style and perhaps a different time zone. They may be used being "on the go" 24 hours a day. It may take a week or two to adjust to a slower pace.
- Expect your Soldier to be surprised or hurt that you've coped so well alone. You can reassure them that they are loved and needed, without giving up your own independence.
- Don't be defensive about the way you've handled the children. Discuss any criticisms calmly.
- Expect to take time to re-establish sexual intimacy.
- Encourage the service member to take days off to relax. It's a tremendous relief for them to feel secure and safe.
- Expect to make some adjustments. Though you're looking forward to the Soldier's return, it may be a challenge for him/her to adjust to changes in where they sleep and for how long; what and when to eat; the people you see; and what you do for fun.

Tips for the Service Member

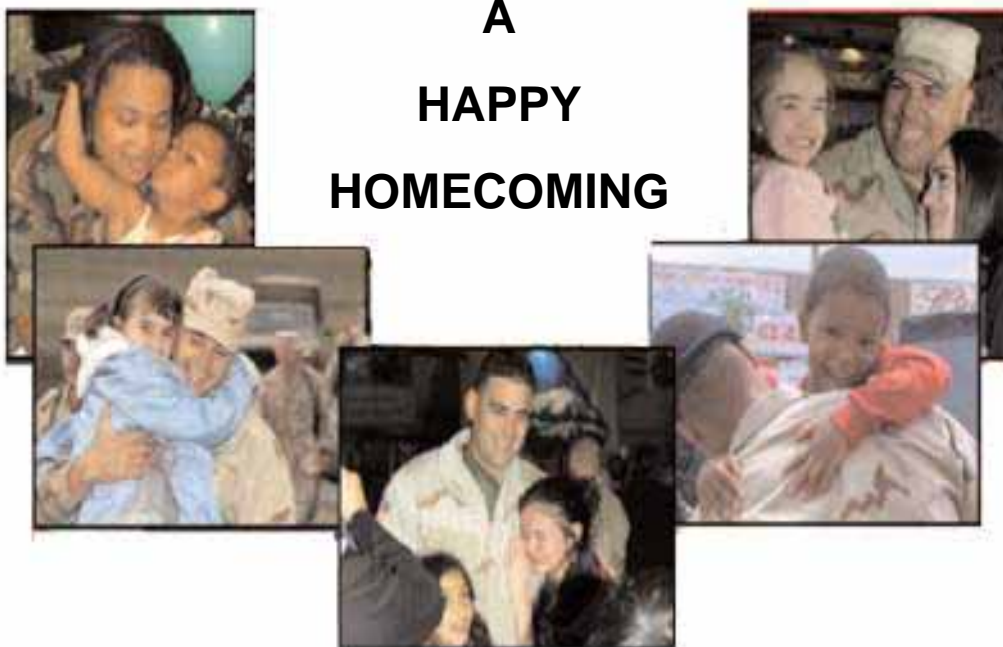
- When you arrive back home, be patient and expect some changes.
- You are entering an environment that you've been absent from for some time. Don't expect

to walk in and return to how things were.

Give your Family and yourself time to readjust. Maintaining stability when you left was important and it's important again during the reunion. Let the adjustments come naturally; If you force changes, your Family will resist your efforts. Ask them to tell you what they expect from you and you can express what you expect from them.

- Support positive changes. Show pleasure and interest in how your Family has grown.
- Take it easy on the kids, especially where discipline is concerned. It's best for the kids to have a constant routine, so let the current rules stand.
- Don't try to alter the financial affairs immediately. Chances are, your spouse has been handling them fine. Remember that prices have probably increased while you were gone. (If something expensive can break, chances are it will happen when you are deployed.)
- Don't ask your partner to pack the kids off to Grandma's so the two of you can have an intimate reunion. It's vital to reaffirm your bond with your children. Later, the two of you can slip away for a "second honeymoon."
- Expect your spouse to be different. Many spouses are more confident and independent. That fact that they can cope without you doesn't mean they want to!
- **ABOVE ALL - TALK WITH YOUR LOVED ONES!** Communication is the basis of healthy and growing relationships.

A HAPPY HOMECOMING



Preparing For a Happy Homecoming

- Talking about your feelings is an important part of preparing for a happy homecoming.
- Spouses may wonder: How much has my partner changed? Have I made good decisions about our money? Did I do OK with the kids? Will I have to stop seeing my friends so much? Will we still have things to talk about?
- Service members may wonder: Will my Family still need me? Will the kids recognize me? How did things go while I was gone? Will they be happy to see me?
- Children wonder, too: Will Dad (or Mom) come to meet my teacher? Will I be punished because I wasn't nice sometimes? Will the rules change at home? How long will Mom (or Dad) stay?

The single most important way to help ease the tension is to maintain communication throughout the separation. Talk about feelings and expectations, and be honest. Talk about changes and how roles, interests, and friends have changes. The old problems have not gone away. For instance, if you and your partner disagreed about how to squeeze toothpaste from the tube before the separation, chances are you'll continue to disagree about it for the next 40 years. Keep your expectations realistic.

Some Tips for Homecoming

- **MAKE IT SPECIAL.** Plan a celebration (if your service member agrees to it) but keep your expectations realistic.
- **STAY FLEXIBLE.** He/she may be very tired. Leave room for changes.
- **STAY CONFIDENT.** Even though your loved one may act differently, he/she is still the same person!
- **NEGOTIATE ACTIVITIES.** Make time for everyone's favorite activities. Ask everyone for ideas.
- **MAKE INDIVIDUAL TIME.** It's important for spouses to spend time together without Family or friends.
- **BE PATIENT AND ADJUST GRADUALLY.** Don't expect everything to happen at once. Readjustment can take weeks. Start with small changes and make them slowly. Large or rapid changes in roles are often a shock for the whole Family.
- **RE - THINK YOUR BUDGET.** Costs will be different with the service member home, and pay may change too. Set realistic goals, stick to your budget, and avoid over-spending.

CHILDREN



CHILDREN AND DEPLOYMENT

Parenting while away from home is not easy. Some separated parents find it so emotionally difficult they withdraw and become significantly less involved in the lives of their children while they are apart. This, of course, is not good either for the parent or the children, not to mention the difficulty this causes the parent/caregiver who is at home alone. The most important aspect of parenting from a distance is making those small efforts to stay in touch. Doing something to say the parent is thinking about and missing the child is what is most important.



Ways to Stay Involved with Your Children During Deployment

Courtesy of the "National Fatherhood Initiative"

Most of us don't want to think about deployment. After all, it means time away from those we love! But the fact is that military families do separate. Deployment can be tough when you don't prepare for it. Here are 10 great tips that can help you and your Family to make it through deployment. Good luck on a successful deployment! Americans appreciate the sacrifices that you make to defend our freedom and way of life!

Be Creative

Today's military offers many ways to stay connected: video and cassette tapes, video conferencing, phone calls, postcards, letters, e-mail and websites, just to name a few. Use the ones that work best for you. And use them often!

Put a "Message in a Bottle"

Before you leave, write as many short messages to your child as you can and put them in a large jar, can, or box. Tell your child to pull out one message a day while you're gone.

Draw Pictures for Your Children

Your kids will love to receive your drawings. Everyone can draw. Yes, even you! The best part is that your kids will love your artwork, even if you don't. So take a pencil, some paper and five minutes to draw a simple picture of you and your child. Then give it to them. You will make their day.

Record Helpful Phone Numbers

The parent who stays home will need to know who to call in a crisis. Even when it's not a crisis, it's easier to have a phone list handy to avoid fumbling for it while the kids are screaming. Make the list before you're deployed. If you're already deployed, encourage the other parent that stays home to do it.

Get Your House in Order

Take care of financial, medical, and legal needs before you leave. Create a deployment spending plan for the Family and decide which parent will pay the monthly bills during deployment. It might make sense to have two checking accounts, one for the parent who stays home and one for the deployed parent. Make sure your Family knows how to use its medical insurance and to get legal aid from the military. Create a Family Care Plan, offered by the military. It describes how your Family will want financial, medical and legal affairs handled during deployment.

Prepare for Changes in Your Children

The biggest complaint many military parents have about deployment is the changes that they will miss in their children. They might miss the first steps, or the first words, or the first birthday. One way to accept the changes is to stay connected as much as possible during deployment. That way the changes won't overwhelm you when you return.

Learn the Basics of Child Development

Even though your children will change while you're away, they will do so in regular and predictable ways. Take the time to learn the basics of child development. If you know what your children will be able to do and not do when you return, you will know what to expect. Suppose you return to a six-month-old daughter and expect that she can eat with a spoon. You might be disappointed when she grabs a handful of mashed carrots with her fist instead. Armed with knowledge about how children develop, you will know that it will take another six months before your princess' table manners improve.

Allow Your Children to Ask Questions and Express Fears

The world can be a scary place. It's your job to keep your kids safe. Kids these days not only have to deal with the boogey man and monsters in the closet, they worry about things they see on the evening news, in the paper, and in real life! War, crime and disease seem to be the main topics these days. Deployment can also scare and worry kids. Before and after you leave, talk with your children calmly and reassure them that everything is okay. Allow them to ask questions and express fears about anything. This will comfort your children.

Get Help If You Need It

If you need help during deployment, it is available. There are all kinds of help for all kinds of problems. You're not alone. Do you have the blues or feel depressed? Do you need a baby-sitter because you're up to your neck in kids? Are you in a deep crisis and need spiritual guidance? Regardless of your need, there are people who can help. Check your local phone book for counselors, parenting classes, spiritual leaders, recreational outlets, swimming pools, suicide hot lines, social organizations, gyms, libraries, and more. The military has many activities for families—everything from outdoor events to basketball leagues to private counseling. It's all at your fingertips. If nothing else, call a relative or an old friend. Reach out for help. . . for your children's sake.

Remember Your Sacrifice for Country and Family

It's no surprise: Parents give up a lot for their children. And military parents give up more than most. They give up personal time, Family time, and stable home lives. Who benefits from your sacrifice? Your Family, your neighbors, and all Americans! Talk with your kids about the meaning of this sacrifice. It will make it easier for them to handle being away from you.



Preparing the Children.

Communication is necessary to help children cope with their parent's absence during deployment.

- Spend time talking with your child about the deployment. At your child's level, explain why dad/mom is going, where, with whom, and for how long.
- Sit down with the whole Family and talk about feelings. Let each member of the Family express how they feel about the separation.
- Discuss the rules of the house. Make them "house rules" rather than mom's or dad's rules.
- Encourage the older children to talk with the younger ones about previous deployments – how long it seemed, what they did, how they felt while dad/mom was away and what it was like when he/she returned.
- Encourage the deploying Soldier to spend time individually with each child: play a game, go for a walk, or go out for an ice cream cone - just the two of you.
- Take pictures of each child with your Soldier, and display the pictures at your child's eye level.
- Have the deploying parent read stories and talk to the children on a tape player.

Dual Military and Single Parent Deployments

Dual military and single parent families on active duty must carefully plan for their children.

- Always have your approved Family Care Plan ready.
- Give the person caring for your child a Power of Attorney for medical care.
- File an "In Loco Parentis" for your caregiver.
- Ensure your caregiver has a valid driver's license.
- Make financial arrangements for all the extra child-related expenses.
- Make sure the rear detachment commander has up-to-date information such as your current address, phone number, and Family Care Plan.
- Keep in touch with your child's teacher. Work together to evaluate, avoid or redirect behaviors resulting from dad/mom's absence.
- Even though it does not require approval by the unit, it is a good idea for the parent staying behind to have a plan in writing in the event of an emergency. List who will care for your children if you become ill or are involved in an accident, and how to reach that person. Post all this information in a place that your FRG leader or rear detachment commander can easily find it - near your telephone or on your refrigerator, for example.

MORE CREATIVE “KEEP IN TOUCH” IDEAS

Some of the following ideas are courtesy of the “Dads at a Distance Activities Handbook”; others are tips from families who have made it through deployments creatively.

Before you leave, compile a “missing Dad/Mom Emergency Box”. When your child is missing you a lot, have him/her choose something from the box. This box might include candy, a favorite video or CD, paper to write you a letter or draw you a picture, phone numbers of where you can be reached and at what times, etc.

Have your child create for the deploying Soldier a “Treasure Box”. Your child will enjoy knowing that all the letters he/she sends you will be stored in a safe place—and the Soldier will enjoy watching it fill up with “treasure.”

Hide a small gift under your child’s pillow before you leave. Before you go, hide your child’s favorite candy bars all over the house.

Post funny sticky-notes in specially hidden places. When your child goes to get his/her toothbrush, there will be an extra “Thanks for brushing those fangs!” waiting there with the toothpaste.

Using a permanent marker, write fun messages on household items your child will be using while you are away, such as a shampoo bottle, cereal box, carton of milk, tube of toothpaste, etc.

LONG DISTANCE FUN

Ask your child what profession he/she wants to go into and then research that career with your child.

Start a joint Family history project. Ask your child which relatives he/she would like to get to know better and have each relative send stories or information about his/her childhood. Have your child organize all the stories and information in a three-ring binder, so you can read it together at a later time.

Join a fan club together.

Buy two identical pairs of socks and send one pair to your child. Choose a day when you will both wear the socks.

Learn a foreign language together. Use it in the letters you write to each other.

Write a letter to your child while sitting in a tree, (a tank, a helicopter, a tower...). Describe to your child the different perspective you have from your cool new place and ask him/her to do the same in the next letter.

Make a treat and give it to someone. Have your child do the same.

Fill out a tournament chart (NCAA, NBA, NHL, NFL, etc.) and have your child do the same. At the end of the tournament see who guessed the most outcomes correctly. Involve a prize for the winner.

Play chess or checkers together through the mail.

Write to your child as if you were a polar bear. Describe what your day would be like in your chilly locale.

Write quizzes for your child about current events in the world.

Find unique things to write your letters on. For example: airsick bags, napkins, stickers, tinfoil, coasters, MRE boxes...

Play "Hide and Seek" from a distance. Have the person who is taking care of your child hide the treats you sent in predetermined "hiding spots." Give your child clues on how to find the treats over the phone or in a letter.

Send a bird feeder to your child and have him/her tell you about the birds that visit.

Have a contest of how many people you smile at during the day and how many people smile back. Report back to each other that night and see who won the more smiles.

Arrange to go cloud watching on the same day and share with each other the different shapes you saw in the clouds.

Chart the phases of the moon together.

Begin a "Life's Lessons Booklet" with your Family. Write to your loved one every day and when the booklet is full, send it to each other.

Buy your child a talking picture frame. Put a favorite picture inside it with a fun message in your own voice.

Ask your child for a list of 5-10 things he/she would like to do together in the next few years. In future letters make detailed plans of when and how you'll do these things.

Write to your child about some of the interesting careers you've seen or heard about.

What were your friends like when you were your child's age? Write a letter describing your friends and some of the activities you did with them. Ask your child to write and tell you about what he/she does with friends.

Share "Top Ten" lists. (Things you like about summer, cool things about the town you're in, top ten foods you eat on a regular basis...)



SPECIAL GIFTS

Arrange for flowers or pizza to be delivered to your Family every other Saturday.

Send a jar with the approximate number of M&Ms as days that are left until you see each other. Instruct your child to eat one a day until you are together again.

Send your child a singing telegram.

Start a coin collection. Send your child money from the country/area where you are stationed.

Send a care package that can only be opened when your child is sick. You could include a can of chicken noodle soup, a get well card, a video, a book, a silly poem, etc...

Call at a time when you wouldn't normally call. (Arrange it with the teacher to call during recess!) Then say, "I just called to say I love you."

Make a videotape of you reading bedtime stories.

Laminate a place-mat with your picture on it so your child can have dinner with you whenever they want.

Set the alarms on your watches to go off at the same time. When both alarms go off, you can know that you're thinking of each other at that same time every day.

Go to bluemountain.com and send an e-card to your child every day for a week. Make up special occasions to do this often. (Examples: Backwards Day, Go Crazy day, Honor Day, Good Health Day, All Red Day...)

Have a fun message monogrammed on a towel and send it to your child.

Give your daughter a locket with your two pictures in it for her to wear every day.

Have a calendar made with pictures featuring the two of you.

Have FTD send your child a small potted plant or seeds that he/she can grow with you in mind.

Have a personalized rubber stamp made for him/her.

Make matching bookmarks with a picture of the two of you at the top of each bookmark.

Order 1 lb. of his/her favorite candy and send it in a gift-wrapped box.

Create your own "book-of-the-month club" with your child. Present them with the certificate of expectation before you leave, then pick out one book for your child to receive from you every month.

Send your child a poster or picture of his/her dream car.

Order an autographed photo of your child's sports hero and send it to him/her.

Have a star officially named after your child. Call 1-800-282-3333.

INTERNET ACTIVITIES

Make a date and take a virtual tour of the White House together at whitehousekids.gov.

Use an Internet crossword puzzle program to make a personalized crossword puzzle for your child. Clues could include special times together, memories or each other's favorite activities.

Sign up with your child for a long distance learning course on the Internet.

Take a virtual vacation to Hawaii with your child.

Explore the PBS website with your child over the Internet at www.pbs.org. There are numerous fun games and information for people of all ages. For younger children, use www.pbskids.org.

Build a webpage celebrating your child's accomplishments and send the web address to him/her.

Search the internet for websites your child might be interested in. Then send the web addresses to your child like an online treasure

hunt. A good place you can start looking is www.yahooligans.com.

Set a date to meet your child on the internet and "accompany" him/her on a virtual field trip of the San Diego Zoo. Go to www.sandiegozoo.org.

Play internet games together like Jeopardy or Wheel of Fortune, both of which can be found at www.sony.com.

Explore nature together at www.nationalgeographic.com. For younger children, use www.nationalgeograhickids.com

Find out what your child knows about Internet safety. In future e-mails, teach Internet safety principles through stories or copied articles.

